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ALEXANDER MACKENNAL

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LIFE AND LETTERS

BY

DUGALD MACFADYEN, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "ALFRED THE WEST SAXON: KING OF THE ENGLISH";
EDITOR OF MADAME GUYON'S "METHOD OF PRAYER," ETC.

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1905

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To the Members of the Bowdon
Downs Congregational Church, served
and honoured by the twenty-eight
years ministry of the subject of this
Biography.



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PREFACE

THIS book has a double purpose to serve which has determined its character. To some it will be simply a memoir of a personal friend, a gracious and dominant personality, belonging to a type and generation of English religious life which is now almost gone. But there are others who discerned in Mackennal a virile, public mind, constantly meditating to good purpose on the widest and most permanent subject of human interest—religion; an independent and cautious thinker, a noble and generous ecclesiastical statesman, living for ideals of the Church of Christ, which his countrymen will not reach for two or three generations; a true apostle of the spiritual kingdom; and to these the important thing is to know something of what he thought on the subjects in which he was chiefly interested. The former are a small and privileged company, the latter are widely distributed, and will be found in many communions of the Christian Church. This has been taken into account in determining the relative proportions of space given to personal and other matters. The record of Mackennal's own doings might have been summarised in a comparatively few pages; but many of his deeds were thoughts, and he influenced his generation more by putting into circulation weighty and well-considered ideas than by forceful and strenuous actions. This accounts for the large space given to letters, and especially to that unique feature, the letters which have been grouped under the title "A Spiritual Directorate" in Chapters viii., ix., xiii., xiv., and xvii.

When a man has left so true a portrayal of his own

mind as these letters contain, adding a touch here and a line there year by year for twenty-five years, the duty of a biographer is clearly not to paint a rival portrait but to supply a suitable frame for the picture. It has been my aim throughout to let Dr. Mackennal speak for himself as much as possible, and to let his own words make their impression on the reader. The travel letters are inserted chiefly for those whose interest in him is personal, and the "Spiritual Directorate" letters for those who care to know his mind on the supreme subjects. They are arranged in chapters by themselves so that either may be omitted by those who read the book with an exclusive interest. The titles of the "Directorate" letters are not in the originals; they are inserted for the purpose of reference.

Such a book as this is naturally a collaboration of many hands rather than the production of one. My obligations are too many to enumerate; if they were to be mentioned in detail I should make my acknowledgments to almost every name which occurs in these pages. The members of Dr. Mackennal's family have given me every possible assistance; but I feel that I owe a debt of special gratitude to the correspondent who prefers to be nameless, who preserved Dr. Mackennal's letters to her as the treasures they were, and then, on the demand of a mere biographer, surrendered them. In these thanks I believe others will wish to join.

I have not felt at liberty to use several personal letters, though to one of these I am under an enduring debt.

DUGALD MACFADYEN.

HIGHGATE,

June 23rd, 1905.

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CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS

“The child of the golden age is glad of his golden memories; he who was born in what may seem less happy conditions has a contentment all his own. One consideration reconciling him to his life is that he is more on his guard against some of the illusions of life, and less disposed than others to despondency when fond visions are dispelled.”—ALEXANDER MACKENNAL.

ALEXANDER MACKENNAL was born at Truro, in Cornwall, on January 14th, 1835. He was third in a family of seven, in which there were three sons and four daughters. His father, Patrick Mackennal, was a Scotsman from Galloway, who had been uprooted from the place of his birth by a double catastrophe, the death of his father and the disappointment of his expectations. The father—Alexander's grandfather—in dismounting his horse in a storm of wind and snow, was blown backwards on to a fence, and fatally injured his spine. Soon afterwards hopes which had been entertained in connection with a lawsuit then pending in the House of Lords were settled by the adverse casting vote of the Lord Chancellor.

Patrick Mackennal set out at the age of sixteen to make his way in the world, and, with Scottish versatility, turned his hand to various employments. After some years in

Truro, he removed to London with his family, and was connected there with a wholesale drapery house.

The influences under which Patrick Mackennal's children grew up may be partly reconstructed from the recollections of one of his daughters. The father was saturated with the religious and political views which made the young Scotsmen of his time a force to be reckoned with all the world over. He was a strenuous and advanced thinker, with a keen sense of political justice, zealous for religious equality, an early advocate of compulsory education, and broad enough in his liberal sympathies to support the grant to Maynooth College. Men of this sort became Independents by native affinity, and joined themselves instinctively to the community which inherited the protest of the Pilgrim Fathers against "the intolerable principle of forcing of conscience." It was a tribute to the effectiveness of Patrick Mackennal's influence on his children that the first guinea which Alexander received as a preaching fee was sent to the Anti-State Church Association, now the Liberation Society.

From the mother's side the children came under influences equally stimulating, but of another kind. Mrs. Patrick Mackennal was a Puritan of the simple English type—gentle, conscientious, and scrupulously fearful of dishonouring the Christian name. There was no sacrifice she would not make for the children's welfare. Her children recalled how she gathered them in her room on Sunday mornings for prayer, and how when they passed her room they sometimes heard their names spoken in the accents of earnest intercession.

If it be true that "he who would be great must first choose good parents," Alexander Mackennal had this first qualification for eminence. Scottish liberalism and English piety united to make an atmosphere in the home

eminently favourable to breadth and dignity of character. As in many such homes, the children were treated from the first as responsible persons. There was little demonstration of affection, and many thought Patrick Mackennal reserved and proud. But his children never doubted his affection, and gave to both parents a confidence, respect, and admiration which grew rather than diminished when they came to know other homes.

Alexander is remembered as a sober, curly-headed child, not robust in health, more thoughtful and less mischievous than most boys of his age. When his brothers took to games, he took naturally to books, and is said to have taught himself to read. In 1848, when he was thirteen, the family removed to London, and Mackennal reaped the benefit in improved educational opportunities; but it was characteristic of him that, though he left Truro at thirteen, he remained in spirit and affection a loyal Cornishman all his life. In London he was sent to a school kept by Mr. William Pinches in Ball Alley, George Yard, in the labyrinth of courts off Lombard Street. The school was an old-established one, for it had been kept by Mr. Pinches' father and grandfather before him, and had a strong *clientèle* among middle-class families. Sir E. W. Brabrook, who was Mackennal's classmate and desk neighbour, mentions that at this time among the boys in the school were John Brodribb, now Sir Henry Irving, and Edward Clarke, now Sir Edward. Alexander Mackennal quickly got to the head of the school, and is remembered by his classmate as a lad of high mental qualifications, straightforward character, and untiring industry. On leaving this school he went to a school in Hackney, Madras House, kept by a Mr. Garland. This was in its day a school which did excellent work. Among its pupils were Dr. William and Mr. Philip Smith, of

scholarly fame, Sir Charles Reed, the famous educationalist, and George Dennis, who wrote a notable work on Etruria.

In October, 1851, at the age of sixteen, Mackennal entered as a student at Glasgow University. He had not then decided what his work in life was to be. He had already discovered the interest in natural science which remained with him throughout life, and had some thoughts of studying medicine. He was not, however, left long in doubt as to his vocation. During a quiet summer in the Highlands after his first session at Glasgow fresh light broke upon his mind, and he resolved to give himself unreservedly to the work of the Christian ministry. While still under the first impressions of this call of God he wrote fully to his mother of his decision; and, though none of his letters have been preserved, his sister recalls the impression they made at home that he was giving himself to the service of Christ unreservedly and with earnestness, sincerity, and conviction.

Accident has preserved one letter from Patrick Mackennal which throws a pleasant light upon the relations of father and son at this time. Mackennal had entered for a £40 bursary (*Anglicè* scholarship), and his father wrote from Bradford in 1853 to wish him success: "You need not alarm yourself much of the deprivations of the family from anything sent to you, as I fondly now anticipate that the weighty end of my expenses is nearly over, and that what is now spent upon the minds' improvement of the family will be more productive and effective in after-life than were it hoarded fast for a few short years and divided in hard cash afterwards." There is a whole theory of life in solution in that sentence.

The following letter from Dr. Joseph Corbett, of Glasgow, records a fellow-student's impressions of

Mackennal with features which are vivid and lifelike enough to carry conviction :—

“ I first made acquaintance with Mackennal in the early fifties, when I entered as a student at Glasgow University. We lodged together with the mother of the late Dr. James Brown, of Paisley, who was also attending classes at the time. They were both of them a little ahead of me, being already among the liveliest and most prominent of the young fellows who then haunted the quadrangles of the venerable college in the High Street. Mackennal did not take such a place in his classes as would have led one to anticipate the prominent part he subsequently played in connection with the work of the Free Churches of England, for, though he showed himself possessed of an alert intellect and a facile pen, his teachers did not inspire him with any great enthusiasm for subjects included in the curriculum. His energy was inexhaustible, but it found outlet in other directions rather than in the endeavour to attain any very high position in academical achievement. He was strong in politics, and was one of the acknowledged leaders of the Liberals in connection with the election of the Lord Rector, one of the regularly recurring opportunities eagerly taken advantage of to turn the courts and class-rooms of the college into scenes of wild excitement and strife, and to indulge in flights of fierce and wonderful oratory. He had his share in the production of the University Album, and contributed to its pages a weird story of love and madness, and he took part in the discussions of the Dialectic Society, of which the late Professor Nichol was a prominent member. We spent many evenings together in the house of the late Dr. John Ker, whose sermons stand in the foremost rank of that type of literature. Many a keen discussion took place there on matters theological, artistic, and the like,

Mackennal often propounding not a few notions that seemed to indicate a wide departure from traditional orthodoxy. He took a youthful pleasure in startling those from whose interpretations of Scripture and doctrine he seemed to dissent. Perhaps the most striking feature about him at this time was the constant overflow of an irrepressible energy, allied with a keen sense of humour and a vivid enjoyment of fun, but there were few indications of the intense earnestness and statesmanlike breadth and solidity subsequently so remarkable in his life. In these early years, however, he was distinguished by a warm-hearted loyalty to his friends, and this quality remained with him to the end, even when circumstances made direct fellowship almost impossible."

Mrs. Nairn, the sister of Dr. John Ker, mentioned above, writes of the evenings spent at Dr. Ker's house: "He was exceedingly amiable, and having read widely, he could always give zest to the conversation. He was not fluent, but always interested in whatever topic was being discussed, and he gave his ideas in few but choice words; and he was especially rich in genial humour. These days were in the early fifties, and were confined to part of two winters. He did not seem to spend much time in social intercourse. He was too hard a student for that."

Mackennal was secretary of the University Liberal Association at the rectorial election when Lord Macaulay was returned Rector; and he used to recall that Macaulay had signed his application for a reader's ticket at the British Museum. His group of friends at Glasgow was one which numbered several names destined to different kinds of distinction. It included Edward Caird, now Master of Balliol, David Binnie Munro the scholar, John Robson, Professor Jack, Professor John

Nichol, with whom Mackennal maintained both correspondence and friendship as long as he lived, T. Campbell Finlayson, and J. A. Macfadyen. Among the late Dr. Finlayson's books was a copy of the Glasgow University Album for 1854, in which he has written in pencil the names of the authors of various articles against the initials or *noms de plume* over which the articles appear. Mackennal's name stands against an experiment in lurid fiction, written in a strong and already mature style.

It was noted as a coincidence afterwards that Mackennal, Finlayson, and Macfadyen, who were at Glasgow about the same time, all found their life work in Manchester and became neighbours. Their names were also associated in a story which may be apocryphal, but which reached the present writer from an authentic source. The story is that when Trinity Congregational Church, Glasgow, was vacant, these three men were among the candidates who were invited to preach. Each found some supporters in the church, and when the church was canvassed it was found that it was about equally divided between the three. For the sake of harmony it was then agreed to withdraw all the names, and to seek for a pastor elsewhere; further search resulted in the settlement of Dr. John Pulsford, the greatest of modern mystics.

Mackennal treasured a lifelong affection for the friends he made in Glasgow. He corresponded intermittently with Professor Nichol, kept in touch with Dr. Corbett, and after an interval of thirty years revived his friendship with Mrs. Nairn as though there had been no break in its continuity.

When in 1854 Mackennal left Glasgow, there was no reason for delaying the next step, and he at once entered as a theological student at Hackney College. One of the

outstanding incidents connected with this step was a letter from Dr. John Ker, which Mackennal preserved, and to which he afterwards referred with special gratitude.

The letter contains the following passage :—

“I enclose such a recommendation as may serve your purpose, and one which I can give with the clearest conscience. I am very glad that you are going forward to the good work to which you have devoted yourself; and giving yourself wholly to it in mind and heart, you will never, I believe, regret the choice you have made for your future life. It is a noble work to serve God in any way, above all in the Gospel of His Son. It needs, however, that we be constantly giving *ourselves* up anew and entirely to Him, for only when this surrender is thorough will our work be a joyful and, through the blessing of God, an effective one. I have every reason to believe that you have not to do this for the first time, but renew it, my dear friend, again and again. Giving up our sinful and imperfect self, we shall receive back a new and better self, not we, but Christ in us.”

Hackney College, where Mackennal entered for his preparation for the ministry, had been originally an undenominational institution for the training of evangelical preachers; and still retains a reminiscence of its origin in its old sub-title, “The Village Itinerancy, or Evangelical Association for the Propagation of the Gospel.” The principal was the Rev. John Watson, of whom Mackennal wrote later, “He was one of those men intercourse with whom is itself an education. He was a fine preacher, an eager student, an accomplished man. He was not a bold thinker, and rather shrank from broad generalisation; but he had an enthusiasm for accuracy both in thought and expression. He was an Evangelical in theology, of liberal culture and broad sympathies.”

In October, 1857, Mackennal graduated as Bachelor of Arts in the First Division in the London University. As the Hackney traditions laid special, if not exclusive, emphasis on the training of preachers, his scholarly

training and ambitions somewhat separated him from the rest of the students. It was remembered that "he kept his study"—a room about nine feet square—"to himself, and himself to his study." The virtues which rank highest in student days—open-hearted and boisterous frankness, easy adhesiveness, quickness of thought, and facility of expression—were not his strong points, and the hidden apartness of a growing mind gave him a reputation for aloofness; but his fellow-students regarded him with confidence, if not with affection. He formed among them at least two friendships which endured, one with Edwin Bolton, well known as a Congregational minister in Kent, and the other with George James Procter, who was afterwards chosen to succeed T. T. Lynch at Mornington Chapel, and whose memoir and sermons Mackennal edited in 1871. With Procter Mackennal used to attend Lynch's ministry when he had a free Sunday, and they both took Lynch's side in the "Rivulet" controversy. Through Procter also he was drawn within the magic circle of the influence of Frederick Denison Maurice.

The following reminiscences illustrate the vivid recollections of a sensitive childhood which went with Mackennal through life; they set his early days in the framework of the English life of that time, and bring out points autobiographically salient. What is said in the second letter about the awakening that came in the Highland shieling may be noted as of special interest, because the circumstances under which spiritual birth takes place have an abiding influence on the character of the subsequent spiritual life:—

(I.) "Certain rooks have established a colony just outside my garden, and I am often awakened by their clamour. As I heard them a few mornings ago a vision flashed on my mind from the oblivion of sixty years—the vision

of a very little boy, in a very large bed, who used to lie and watch a rookery out of the upper panes of his window, and listen to the cawing. The rooks in the trees had not, however, the fascination for him which the rooks in the sky had. In the rookery the rook chatters and fidgets; the rook in flight strains and cries. He has thrown himself on the air, which is a firmament to bear him up. Everything in him betokens a reaching forward; his projected head and level beak, his lengthened neck, the strong beat of his wings, are in unison with the yearning note of his voice. The child used to look up on a late afternoon when he heard the familiar sound, and the flying bird filled him with a strange non-content. He did not understand what he was feeling. Years after, when he read of

“‘The many-wintered crow that leads the clanging rookery home,’

he was glad that Tennyson had seen what he saw, and could interpret the sounds he used to listen for.

“It is not enough to say, ‘I was that little boy’; I am that little boy. Very often when I am looking into a baby’s face I see exactly what the face will be fifty or sixty years on; and sometimes I see in the face of an old man or woman what the mother saw when she looked at the infant in her arms. Not all growth is change; perhaps those change the least who grow the most. Life has become larger to me; both the microcosm and the macrocosm are the same. A few years after leaving my early home I went back to it. I used to think that the rookery in the elm tops must be the end of the world; I walked out from the old bedroom, and in less than a minute and a half I stood under some trees, and looking up, I saw immediately that I had come to what I had thought the end of the world. I have long ceased to gaze after the

rooks, but I am still the victim of what Pierre Loti so finely calls *la nostalgie de l'avenir*; there are other things which beget in me the old straining and reaching after home. . . .

“ I was born in the end of the age of iron. My first memory of things political is that of a flag which bore the inscription ‘ Death to monopoly ! ’ flying from a tall factory chimney. I asked my mother what it meant, and she said that the corn laws were repealed. I was glad to hear it because of her glad look when she told me, but I did not understand it. Now I associate that flag with some other items of remembrance. When I went to my nurse’s house, or stayed a day or two among the miners where was the home of the servant who took me with her for a holiday, I would be regaled with hot barley bread, well buttered. It was a great treat, but now I am sure that my hostess and her family did not fare like that every day; they lived on stale barley bread without butter. And if I had lived with them I think I might have been eating more wholesome food than our own wheaten bread very often was. For the barley was well ripened, and the English summer is not always hot enough to ripen wheat. ‘ Bad bread ’ was a proverbial phrase for troubles it was not easy to get out of. The moist, unripened flour would not rise; for many weeks we might have close, stodgy loaves—‘ Sad bread ’ it was rightly called. I never see such bread now, for the high-dried corn of Austria, India, Russia, and the American prairies, when mixed with the moister corn of our own fields, gives us well-leavened loaves. But how long it took to bring about Free Trade; and how the selfishness, the unreasoning dogmatism, of our legislators increased the misery of the people.

“ Another of my early remembrances is the swearing in of special constables in Truro, because it was expected

that the miners of Redruth and Camborne were coming in by hundreds to pillage our town. I grew serious at night as I lay in bed, and could fancy them marching down, in the deep shadow of the hedges, with pikes and sticks, and perhaps with guns. The Cornish are a gracious and a longsuffering people, easily contented and well disposed toward the powers that be, complacent toward the respectabilities. But the powers that be and the respectabilities were not equally considerate of them. The men and their wives and children were starving. I understand now what I remember: the spare women whose calico prints clung to their bodies, so scanty was their underclothing; the thin faces and defective teeth; the high colour of the cheeks, which contrasted with the general pallor of the face; the prevalence of consumption. The municipalities swore in special constables, and the Church circulated Mrs. Hannah More's tracts. I well recall those tracts in crown octavo, bad print on soft yellow paper, which you could have blotted your letters with, in cover of dark grey unsized paper, like that in which sugar used to be wrapped. The moral was always the same, whether the story was of the returned soldier regaled with pork and cold cabbage while he spoke gaily of the glory of serving his country, or the cheerful cobbler at his lapstone, always the blessedness of the poor in ordering themselves lowly and reverently toward their betters. There were humane men and women, beautifully humane, among both the rich and the poor; but of humanity in legislation and administration we never heard. If a man became discontented—and there was much in the common lot to arouse dissatisfaction—he was likely to be a rebel against society, for there was no hope of the amelioration of social conditions. . . . Ecclesiastical distinctions were as rigid as the distinction between rich and poor; very few

individuals were unamiable, but the whole social life was hard.

“The great lack of the time was moral elevation in political sentiment and social aspiration. We were loyal; of course we were loyal. We prayed in all good faith for the Queen and the Royal Family, and when Prince Albert once visited our town, we turned out in our little fineries to give him welcome. But the reign of Victoria was as yet too new for its glory to be revealed, and the Prince Consort was not yet known as Albert the Good. When people talked about royal personages, they spoke of the sailor king and his ante-marital connections, of George IV. and the Queen Caroline scandal, or of Farmer George and old Charlotte with the droppings of snuff on her cambric. I remember the Oregon difficulty and President Polk. I have seen Portland since then, and marked the contrast between undeveloped British Columbia and the States of Washington and Oregon, and I have been glad that things are as they are. I know now that the United States had almost allowed Oregon to escape them by default, and that Polk was not a model president. But if the case had been much clearer than it seemed then, and if, instead of Polk, Lincoln or Garfield had been in the White House, it would have been the same—we should have been confident that England must be right, and foreigners wrong.

“In the churchyard of Kirk Hallam, Derbyshire, there is an epitaph over the grave of an old man who lived through the wars with Napoleon, and died in 1820. His conspicuous excellence is recorded:—

“‘True to his king, his country was his glory;
When Boney won he said it was a story.’

“That was the spirit of the times; anything that might shake the national self-complacency was, or ought to have

been, a 'story.' I have in my mind the picture of a little boy in a missionary meeting in the days of Queen Pomare and the Tahiti question. A returned Wesleyan missionary was on the platform in the Congregational schoolroom, and as he described a small English schooner in a South Sea harbour safe and unafraid though French frigates were also there, because 'the Union Jack of Old England was at her masthead,' there was as much of the thunder of applause as a few score of excited people could respond with. The little boy sat and wondered at it all ; he had not expected that sort of self-abandonment at a missionary meeting.

"Our own minister was a grave gentleman, a thoughtful preacher, and faithful pastor of the Puritan type. I have seen some of his sermons since, and I know now what his spiritual dignity was, and what his influence on his congregation must have been. Moral and spiritual interests were always foremost in my mother's cares and affections. My father was accustomed to reflect on matters ; he saw the larger bearing of things, and could realise in his imagination the thoughts and feelings, the needs, the self-respect, the attachments and perplexities, of other people, people of other nations, other classes, and other lots. It is not to be wondered at that a child so brought up, and amid such conditions, should have moved about as in a 'world not realised,' and felt a home-sickness which he could not understand.

"It must not be supposed that the life even of a Puritan child was unhappy. The boys of the town enjoyed a rare freedom ; all the streets were our playground at evening ; we ran and hid ourselves and shouted amid the shadows, and there were none to make us afraid. School was very enjoyable to me, and there was a box of books under my bed, which I read on awaking in the morning. I had gone through the 'Spectator' more than once

before I was eleven; Sterne's 'Sentimental Journey' followed; and the 'Castle of Otranto,' and 'Gulliver's Travels,' and 'Don Quixote' followed. They fed my wonder, and did me no harm, for I had not yet eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

"Emancipation came when my family removed to London, in the year 1848, just in time to see taken down from the Bank of England the sand bags which had been used to defend the building should it be attacked by the Chartists. The largeness of a London school and the new interests the metropolis brought into the home life were wholesome. The end of the Chartist agitation is a fair enough landmark of the beginning of sounder, humaner, more exalted political and social endeavours. Then came 1851, with its great exhibition and international alliances, and a new consciousness that trade and industry, art and knowledge, might well be handmaids of the kingdom of heaven. Gradually there was, in many circles of the national life, a revelation like that which broke on Alton Locke in Dulwich Gallery, and the author of 'Alton Locke' was one of the interpreters and guides of the new day. The age of iron had ended; we fancied that the golden age had come, and that it was going to last. But I have never regretted my Puritan education, nor lost the straining after home. Least of all am I disposed to regret it now, when the Puritan is called for once more.

"'Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour;
England hath need of thee.'"^{*}

(II.) "I have a picture of myself as a somewhat feeble and thoughtful small boy burdened with a sense of the seriousness of life. I remember when I was quite a child being unusually light-hearted on a summer's day. Suddenly my sister said: 'You seem glad to be alive.' In a moment

* Published in the *Sunday Magazine*.

my joyousness was destroyed by my habitual sense of the gravity of life. What later struck me was the inconsistency of older people. All their teaching went in the direction of gravity ; the tremendous contrast of the eternal future was impressed on our minds, especially with regard to the number of those who would be lost and the fewness of the souls that would be saved; yet they expected children to be happy and joyous and grateful to God, who had brought them into a state of being and placed them under such tremendous responsibility. But I have since come to suspect that it was only here and there a child who would take it all with seriousness, or whose life would be affected by it.

“That continual mood of seriousness remained with me very long, and I did not get out of it until I went to college. There the teaching of Maurice, Kingsley, and the Broad Church changed all that thoroughly. I had always apprehended the idea of a God of grace and infinite love; now I perceived that the common world of beauty and enjoyment was His creation.

“My acquaintance with literature began early, and it was unconstrained. The ‘Spectator’ gave me an unfailing pleasure. I read it through two or three times, and my favourite essays more than that, before I was thirteen; and accidentally other books of the eighteenth century came before me. I think that my own literary style and my love of literature have been formed on that period, so that the stylists of the nineteenth century have no charm for me. The artificiality of Ruskin and Carlyle, to say nothing of Stevenson and Pater, has always repelled me somewhat, and sent me back to enjoyment of the earlier men, the styles of Addison, and Steele, and Swift.

“The first teacher who did me good in the way of instruction was my aunt. She gave me a thorough

grounding in elementary subjects. My next teacher was an old Bluecoat schoolboy, and although I did not think much of his teaching at the time, when at thirteen years of age I went to London I found myself fully able to hold my own amongst my new schoolfellows.

“As a lad I never was much at games, and I taught myself chemistry, making many simple experiments. In after years botany had a charm for me, and I followed it simply for the pleasure of the pursuit. For many years botany has served the place of athletics, and draws me out of myself. In the search for interesting specimens one has to climb and walk pretty freely, and this is a good substitute for constitutional exercise

“My real intellectual awakening came when I went to Glasgow University, during the three years I studied there from about my seventeenth year. This awakening came, not so much along the line I was studying as in collateral subjects. In the Latin class the passages from English literature given me to translate really impressed me more than the Latin books we read. Then logic and metaphysics added their quickening power; whilst outside the class-work I had intercourse with University men who became well known—Professor Nichol; J. M. Ross, who edited the ‘Globe Encyclopædia’; and James Brown, of Paisley, the author of ‘The Scottish Probationer,’ &c. There was great literary and intellectual activity in this circle, and it stimulated my own love of literature.

“When I was seventeen I went for four months in the summer from Glasgow University to act as tutor in a Highland family. A great change in my life was wrought, and led to my giving myself to the ministry. Some humble, religious people with whom I came into contact left a very powerful impression on me. I can recall a Highland ‘shieling,’ where there was no fireplace; the

smoke curled up from a hole in the roof, the rafters were black with soot, and there was only a box to sit down on. The people were Scotch Baptists, and I resorted to them as one in need of spiritual help. My early belief in Congregational principles was invigorated by my experience there, when I found the blessedness of religious intercourse with those simple shepherd folk.

“One incident about this time I sometimes recall. Being fond of swimming, one day I tried to swim across a lake. This was quite within my powers, but I had omitted to notice a strong breeze that had arisen, and failing to regulate my breathing, I was in danger of being drowned. I fully expected, from what I had read, that the history of my life would flash upon me, and that I should have terrible agitation of spirit. It was not so, however. Only two things came into my mind as I was expecting to sink, one was that the people would have to search my box to find out the address of my father and mother, the other was the thought of what my mother would feel when she got the intelligence of my death.

“Later on I went to Hackney College and graduated at London University. I then found that the irregular method of education I had acquired was not without some value. The independent judgment I was able to exercise was advantageous in many ways. From my tutor at Hackney, the Rev. John Watson, I learned the value of habitual use of the dictionary and books of reference. There was not a man in the house who made so much use of dictionaries, English as well as Hebrew, as the Principal of the college. From him I learned my love of dictionaries. If I were to be shut up for one month, and could have only one book, I think I should choose a dictionary, either Johnson, Liddell and Scott, or Facciolati for Latin. My course, even in college, was to a large extent solitary and

independent. In a very real sense I have been my own schoolmaster, and I have both the advantages and the disadvantages of the method to the present day."*

One episode which belongs to these days shows that already Mackennal had the tenderness which often goes with a reserved exterior. Among the private papers which came to be examined after his death there was a child's slate with a drawing on it, and a small gold heart with some hair in it. None of his children knew the story of the slate or could explain its presence among private and important papers; but enquiry from Mrs. Chambers, of Leicester—Mackennal's elder sister—brought to light the following pretty story. When the family lived in London and Mackennal was at Hackney, there lived next door a child, Nellie Daleman, aged about five years. There was a sweetness and a charm about the child which both families recognised as something unusual even for an age when all children are interesting. Nellie chose as her friend, Alexander Mackennal. When he appeared in the garden Nellie was soon seen waiting anxiously for an invitation to join him. She wanted nothing more than to be allowed to walk beside him and hold his hand while he talked of matters which could have no meaning for her. This unequal friendship was broken by an attack of scarlet fever which soon wore out the delicate frame of Mackennal's little friend. On the last day of her life he went to see her, and she died with the smile on her face that followed him as he left her room. The slate was Nellie Daleman's, the drawing the last thing her childish fingers had done, and it was her hair which the trinket contained. They were gifts from the child's mother to Mackennal, and kept for him something of the aroma of a loved childhood for a lifetime during which he never spoke of the incident in his own home.

* Published in the *Sunday Companion*.

CHAPTER II

BURTON-ON-TRENT, 1858—1861

“Remember all

*He spoke among you, and the man who spoke,
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor paltered with Eternal God for power.”*

IN 1858 Mackennal was invited to undertake the pastorate of the Congregational Church at Burton-on-Trent, and in May of that year he settled there. The Congregational ministry gave him the sphere which he required. He was of the massive order of men, growing at first on different sides of his character unequally, with powers not of the showy and captivating kind, which required time and freedom to develop. He was original but not brilliant, profound rather than captivating, and wanted from his human environment sympathy and patience rather than stimulus or constraint. The chief interest of his life lies in its continual inward development and its constant unfolding of fresh and often unsuspected spiritual resources.

Of Burton-on-Trent there is not much to be said, except that it was his first pastorate. A first pastorate is always something of an experiment and much of an experience, and in Burton Mackennal learned as much as he taught. The religious atmosphere of Burton, strongly evangelical and low church, was not favourable to a robust type of Free Church life, and its outlook on moral and public questions was naturally affected by the staple trade

of the town. The vast overpowering breweries, which are such a striking feature in the appearance of the town, are not less dulling and dominant as a factor in its moral and religious life.

The Congregational Church is a Gothic building in a good position, and was at that time the principal Nonconformist church in the town. It was attended by some whose religious views did not extend beyond a horizon strictly, perhaps narrowly, orthodox and evangelical. Mackennal, on the other hand, was under the spell of Frederick Denison Maurice, and to some his breadth of outlook and interest appeared to be a dangerous innovation, but as long as he was in Burton they remained personally loyal to him. A section of these people afterwards left the Congregational Church and formed the nucleus of a Presbyterian Church in Burton, and by way of counter-acting the Maurician tendencies of the young Congregationalist, they invited—by a singular irony—his most intimate college friend, Joseph Corbett, of Glasgow, to be their minister. The invitation was not accepted, and the friends were spared a situation which had elements of strain. Dr. Corbett writes :—

“ Mackennal had just left Burton when I was called there. Those who had started the Presbyterian Church in the town had, most of them, belonged to his congregation. The leaders among them professed themselves dissatisfied with what they regarded as his departure from the evangelical standpoint as they understood it, and they conceived there was need in Burton for preaching more in line with their conception of things. They thought, particularly, that he was not ‘sound’ on the question of the Atonement; they believed he was a disciple of Maurice, and in those days that was sufficient proof of heresy.

“ This was the origin of the Presbyterian cause in Burton, and I was the first called to the pastorate of the church, the supposition being that, hailing from Presbyterian Scotland, my teaching would be more ‘orthodox’ and less dangerous. However, I did not accept the

call, and the old friendship was strengthened rather than weakened by the curious coincident."

It was probably with the division of his former flock in mind that Mackennal wrote from Surbiton :—

"I am almost afraid to ask how you are getting on. The state of the Burton Church by no means is hopeful, nor does it suggest hopeful thoughts. I still trust, however, that in time—perhaps after even more thorough purging—some real prosperity may await you. It may come in the form of deeper humiliation, but come how it may, I shall rejoice to hear of it."

Mackennal was thus early identified by critical minds, brought up in the atmosphere of Calvinism, with the broader, mystical, and humanitarian type of Christian thought represented by Maurice, and this probably helped to deepen an influence which was already considerable. Maurice's desire for unity, his subtle and thoughtful, rather than emotional, mysticism, and his noble passion for the hallowing of life, became native strains in Mackennal's thought. Though his own mind was too vigorous and independent to be permanently dominated by any one teacher, he owned Maurice's influence to the end. He first assimilated, then reacted on Maurice's thought, accepting and rejecting, with singular sobriety of judgment. His riper estimate of Maurice, and an appreciation of his influence on the generation of Congregationalists to which Mackennal belonged, is given in a passage in the Carew lectures* which has the ring of an autobiographical statement, and is of first-rate importance to anyone who wishes to understand the mental fibre of Mackennal's personality. The passage contains in a compressed form the results of years of thought, and of mature self-criticism on the experiences of this early period.

He begins by quoting Maurice's own description of how

* Pp. 198—202, "Evolution of Congregationalism."

the differences of religious creed in his early home fostered in him the passion for unity—"the reconciliation of those various earnest faiths which the household presented." He became a member of the Church of England, not because he accepted the ecclesiastical doctrine of that body, but because the reconciliation of apparent antinomies was the master motive of his life.

"This," said Mackennal, "was the secret of the influence which Maurice came to exercise on young Congregationalists. They, like him, stood for the ideal of a Christian Church which had no excluding shibboleths.

"It was not because he had any sympathy with them ; he displays a singular want of appreciation of their position. He repudiated their demand for the rights of the individual conscience interpreted by the individual judgment, and he was repelled by even the modified form in which Evangelicals spoke of personal experience. The controversy between him and men like Dr. John Pye Smith and Dr. Wardlaw has a bitterly intolerant spirit, from which Maurice, in his early days, was not free. His 'Kingdom of Christ' is painful reading, alike to those who love him and to those who love Congregationalism. It is dogmatic, one-sided in statement, perverse in temper. In later years the harshness became softened, but the intolerance remained. Under the influence of Thomas Erskine, of Linlathen, he learned to understand Calvinism better, but his narrow judgment of the Separatist testimony never left him. Just as the typical Dissenter of that period saw everywhere in the Bible a condemnation of the identification of the Church and State, so Maurice saw in it from first to last a condemnation of those who thought that, in Christian fellowship, the godly should separate themselves from the godless. His exegesis is continually turning on this one point ; no literalist is more confident in his quotation of Scripture than is this broad-hearted man when he reads his own thought into the stories of Genesis, the Old Testament prophets, and the writings of the Apostles ; without a suspicion of the irreverence of the practice, he will expand an utterance of Christ into long paragraphs of controversial matter, contained within inverted commas, as if Jesus had dictated all that Maurice is saying. He did not know that many young Congregationalists were passing through a stage of sentiment

like that he had experienced in youth, were tired of solitude and sectarianism ; it surprised him to learn that they read his writings for the sake of the larger reaches of social, national, and spiritual fellowship which he was opening up to them, and for the sake of these could bear patiently with his severe and uncomprehending censures of much which they held dear.

“ In political and social matters there were many affinities, and even some co-operation between him and the Dissenters. He, like them, was a Liberal who had passed beyond Whig pedantry and the revolution settlement. They, like him, advocated the extension of the franchise and the claims of the workman. They were glad that, when he was put out from his professorship in King’s College, London, for heresy, he was free to become principal of a working men’s college, and they gave his college what little help and large sympathy they could. . . . He worked with the Congregationalists, Edward White and Edward Miall, to secure a conference between representative artisans and Christian ministers of all denominations for the discussion of the question : ‘ Why do not working men come to church ? ’ ”

Here Mackennal passes naturally to the first person :—

“ The occasions of our meeting with him thus were very rare, and our intercourse rigidly restricted, but we had him to ourselves in the study, and it was in his theological and philosophical writings that his true force was found. *The rigour of individualistic reasoning was loosened when he told us that personality without society was an impossibility to thought ; that the obligation of social unity was not left to our choice, but was a necessity of our very being ; that no man could exist, save as a member of a family, of a nation, of the race ; that deep below the judgments of the individual mind there was in every one of us the common reason, the conscience of mankind, and that the training of history had been at work upon us before we began consciously to be.*

“ To Maurice is owing the conception of Christ’s headship of the human race, which has given modern English Congregationalists a firmer grasp of the doctrine of the Atonement, and enriched their sense of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Dr. Dale devotes the tenth chapter of his Congregational Union lecture to this subject, and he speaks of the ‘ great energy ’ with which it has been insisted on by Mr. Maurice and his disciples. Dale used to affirm that he had not

learnt this from Maurice, and the two men do not hold it in exactly the same way. Maurice speaks of Christ as the root and head of humanity, the words seeming to be borrowed from the passage in the Apocalypse, 'I am the root and offspring of David,' the historical manifestation being founded on a primal relation, and it is quite consonant with his mystic habit that he treats it almost as a truth of intuition. With Dale it is—as was the doctrine of imputed righteousness with older theologians—a necessary factor in the general scheme of the Atonement, and he deduces it from the personal experience of the Apostles. Moreover, Dale, while speaking of Christ's headship of the human race, does not apply it to any fact in human history except the redemption of the race by Christ; he rejoices to recognise the solidarity of Christ and His believing people, and the solidarity of the Church, but he does not speak of the solidarity of mankind. Maurice sees solidarity everywhere: in the family, in the nation, in humanity. And Maurice's teaching is needed to supplement Dale's. The value of Dale's 'Lectures on the Atonement' was felt in its strenuous assertion of the fact that the self-offering of Christ was an objective ground of justification, not simply the incentive and example of sanctification; and this we received all the more gladly because we had already learnt the responsibility of men as members of the race, as well as individuals, from Maurice's Sermons on Sacrifice. . . .

"The time has not yet come to estimate the effect of Maurice on the religious and social thinking of the century. I often suspect that when it can be appraised it will be seen that his abiding influence has been, not on English Churchmen, but on English Congregationalists."

True as these words are of others of the speaker's generation, they are most true of himself.

It was in Burton that Mackennal first showed the fine qualities of pastoral oversight which made him all his life a true bishop of souls and churches. Connected with the Burton Church there was a small village chapel at Branstone, dependent for its support very largely on the zeal and sacrifice of one family—the Shipleys. With this family Mackennal formed a friendship which endured to the end of his life, through nearly fifty years. To her son, born shortly after Mackennal left Burton

for Surbiton, Mrs. Shipley gave his name, Alexander. Mackennal sent her each of his books as they were published, and they corresponded at intervals as events in either family or in the Church gave occasion. The present writer was told that the Branstone folk still looked back to Mackennal's pastorate at Burton as the best days of the Branstone "cause," and he on his part was always ready to talk of the village church. He had the faculty of inspiring men of the labouring class with confidence in him, partly perhaps owing to the fact that he ignored the distinction of class and treated them with scrupulous regard for the worth of their personal character and life. One such, an elderly working-man who belonged to the Burton Church, used to walk over to Branstone, however dreary the wintry night might be, for the pleasure of his minister's company on the homeward road. Out of such friendships grew a feeling which Mackennal was pleased to own. "I confess," he said, "to an affection for obscure people; to feeling a charm in the mention of any who 'travel on life's common way in cheerful godliness.' The priceless service they render should be frankly recognised and generously repaid. They deserve the consideration, affection and regard which is ever due to those who are labouring, not for their own, but others' good."

Mackennal continued to write to his correspondents in Branstone at intervals throughout his life. As the letters are significant simply for their local and personal associations they are grouped together here. They illustrate the happy combination of friendly sympathy and pastoral solicitude which was entirely natural to him.

"12th Feb., 1862.

"I must not let you think that I have forgotten Branstone and the kind friends there. They were pleasant hours I used to spend with you; both in the pulpit and out, I found enjoyment and true Christian pleasure.

“ You will be pleased to know we all are well, and that things are moving comfortably on. We have from time to time additions to the church, and the congregations are attentive. For the first time since I have been here I was out of my pulpit last Sunday, having exchanged for the evening service with the Independent minister at Kingston, about a mile away. I did not feel at home in his pulpit as in my own. It is astonishing how soon I have settled down among the people here ; I feel as if I had known them and been their pastor many years. But Christians ought soon to get friends, though often there is some natural uncongeniality which keeps them apart.

“ You must give my kindest regards . . . to Mrs. Shipley, senior, whose wonderful vitality keeps her still unmoved amid so many changes. Her only change, we trust, will be a very blessed one ; she herself must surely be often more than waiting, even longing, for it. Yet tell her that sometimes to wait is a higher Christian effort than to long, for death ; to be willing to live demanding more patience and self-denial than to be willing to die. Either as Christ shall choose, that should be our wish ; to live is Christ and to die is gain. . . .”

“ 30th July, 1862.

“ I should have written you much earlier to congratulate you on the birth of your son, my name-sake ; but I have been away for my holiday, and altogether unsettled. Now I am in regular harness and regular habits once more, I have remembered you ; and it gives me great pleasure to offer you my kindest regards and best wishes on the important occasion. I hope you will have much joy in the little man. Both to you and Mr. Shipley, this increasing family will not fail to suggest thoughts about increased responsibilities. To Christians, however, responsibility is always joy as well ; for what is responsibility but the proof of Divine favour and regard, and He giveth strength Who gives the demand for it.

“ I did not need anything to make me think of Branstone with interest and pleasure. Though sometimes the walk was a weary one, I always felt sure of a kind and hearty welcome, and I am not without hope that good of some sort followed my labours there. But the very name of your new son will make me think with even more interest of you all. . . .

“ My holiday was spent in Jersey, and I enjoyed the sea-breezes and sea-views exceedingly. And I have come home to find work ready for me, and to an increased congregation. We are about enlarging the chapel, probably by means of an end gallery. I have not pressed it on the people, I did not even suggest it to them. . . .”

"5th March, 1868.

"I am afraid just now it would be unwise to incur any expense in the extension of the new school-room. It is almost certain that Parliament will so decide about popular education as to render such efforts useless and impossible of continuance. A school for the village, undenominational and with perfect liberty of conscience for all, would not only be the best thing ; it is the only thing that will be at all likely to continue. By all means continue your school. I am delighted to hear of its success. But don't involve yourself just now in anxiety and expense when the whole question of National Education is so exciting public interest and will soon lead to legislation.

"If a nationally helped school is introduced into the village, all dissenters must busy themselves to get the "Conscience clause" introduced into the trust-deed. . . .

"This so far about a day-school building. If you can get a Sunday school-room built, that of course is entirely unobjectionable ; and you might use it as a day-school. But, in any case, I think the time for small village day-schools is coming to a speedy end. I regret it for many reasons, but the current of public feeling is very strong. . . ."

"27th June, 1882.

"I am very glad to hear of what you are doing at Branstone, and I enclose you a guinea towards the cost. It always gives me pleasure to look back on my work at Branstone, when I learnt to speak to country people. Now it is one of my greatest pleasures to stand up in a village pulpit and preach to a few folk. I have here four village churches ; three of them are under the charge of resident evangelists, but all the four are branches of the Bowdon Church. It is a regret to me that I cannot personally visit them oftener, because the work at Bowdon is so heavy . . ."

CHAPTER III

SURBITON, 1862—1870

“Perhaps we are wrong in fearing, as we do, what the effect of popularity will be on young and earnest preachers, as if God could not preserve those whom He calls to eminent service.”—ALEXANDER MACKENNAL.

IN 1862 Mackennal left Burton for Surbiton, near Kingston, in Surrey, a Church which was then in the first ardour of growth. The Church's history had begun in 1853 with the preaching of the Rev. Richard Henry Smith in his own parlour. A congregation had been gathered, a temporary wooden building had soon given place to a permanent hall—the Surbiton Park Hall—and there was every promise of rapid and prosperous development.

Mackennal made a brief and characteristic reference to his own feeling in undertaking work in this new sphere, at the recognition service held in the new church:—“I recognise God's guidance in my life, His call to repentance, to faith and to obedience, that it is He who put me into the ministry and brought me here. I magnify His grace this day, thanking Him because ‘I know in whom I have believed.’ With respect to the special circumstances that have led to my acceptance of this pastorate, I have not much to say. I cannot tell you how I have come to the conviction that it is His will that I should labour here. No man can make clear to any other the special process by which such conviction is produced. I must content myself with simply declaring, and you

must be content simply to receive the declaration, that I am deeply, thoroughly persuaded that I am now where I ought to be. I thank God for instruction in the truth and look for further light. I look for continued fitness for the work that may lie before me, I hope for usefulness in connection with this Church, and trust that every day may prove more fully that we are rightly united.” He also took the occasion to make a long and interesting statement of his own belief as to the Atonement, which is, for a man of twenty-seven, unusually weighty and mature. It may be compared with a later and more mature account of his faith in “a Symposium on the Atonement,” published in 1883.* In his contribution views which have since become explicit are suggested. He finds the reason for the progressive change in theories of the Atonement in the fact that the doctrine of the Atonement is ethical as well as theological; as the ethical consciousness of mankind develops, the study of ethics and of all ethical problems must be progressive also. He distinguishes between forgiveness and redemption, and holds that forgiveness is an act of God’s love costing a true sacrifice; and that redemption is the work of Christ, and must be understood through the social constitution (or solidarity) of humanity and Christ’s headship of His people; he suggests that when the whole transaction is thought out on the highest spiritual plane the idea which in the physical plane appears as substitution, in the spiritual plane reappears as the union of the members with the head. The only part of the essay which would need to be re-cast if re-written now from a similar point of view, would be its treatment of the symbolism of Leviticus; and some ideas which are only suggested might also be worked out more adequately; but the main argument is remarkably

* By Messrs. Nisbet & Co.

well stated—that “the Atonement must be preached as the Divinely appointed means of salvation, an objective ground of the sinner’s faith and forgiveness. . . . But we have no means of apprehending the reason of the Atonement apart from the work it accomplishes in the spiritual consciousness of the race.”

At Surbiton the main lines of his statement were these:—

“The Bible reveals God’s grace. Everywhere else we trace the operation of law ; divine wisdom, power, and love working through means of His own ordination. Here we see Him operating immediately, divine wisdom, power and love, working directly in human history, working directly on the human heart. Atonement and salvation ; the one a fact recorded, the other a work perpetually being carried on, are the modes in which the grace of God proclaims itself. . . .

“The atoning grace of God is seen in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It becomes us to look with reverence into the meaning of Christ’s death for sin, as into a subject far passing in its magnitude our feeble comprehension. That death was necessary for the pardon of sinners ; so the Bible clearly tells us—but the absolute necessity that belongs to the dealings of infinite wisdom, is mysterious with all the mystery of God. Nevertheless, the language of the Bible invites us to reverent study of the meaning of the Cross, and some at least, of its bearings on the government of God may so be apprehended.”

Then follows a closely reasoned argument to the effect that:—

(1) The fact of Atonement stands over against the fact of sin, and is to be understood through the meaning of sin :

(2) The nature of sin, as eternally offensive to God, makes an Atonement necessary :

(3) The Atonement must make manifest not only God’s forgiveness, but also His abhorrence of sin. He continues :

(4) “The law, the word, the will, the character of God are vindicated in the sacrifice of His Son. . . . For if thus is proclaimed the sanctity of God’s character, on the other hand, there is no more striking proof of His mercy than that in the suffering and death of Christ He did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.

“The death of Christ is thus a sacrifice for sin, which God provides and accepts as the mode whereby the sinner may draw near to Him ; it is a propitiation for sin, for through it God is well-pleased to receive

the sinner ; it is an expiation for sin, for righteousness is beheld even the more abundant in that it vindicates itself against the insult and offence of transgression. He then takes the central thought of the Atonement to be 'that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,' and shows how this fills the facts of life and death for Christ with glorious meaning. "If righteousness is seen in its sanctity, sin in the death of Christ appears exceeding sinful." "There is a divine fitness in the Son of God atoning for transgression, inasmuch as the price of redemption is more precious than the thing redeemed."

"There is a divine meaning in the life of Christ, as it reveals to us the character of God in human guise. There is a divine becomingness in the *Man* Christ Jesus offering Himself a free-will sacrifice for the sins of *men* ; and in incarnate sacrifice coming with the message of God's mercy and forgiveness—divine love and divine holiness dwelling as man among men, and thus hallowing all human life. There is a glory about the human life of Christ as it shows to us what God intended man to be ; a power in His example, a hallowing influence in His sympathy, and a proof of His fitness to be our eternal friend and advocate and intercessor, since He endured temptation, learned obedience by the things which He suffered and became in all points like unto His brethren, yet without sin. These and other aspects of the Cross, which tongue can never tell and eternity alone can show, when once we grasp its atoning power, yield us store of divine truth, and ever increasingly impress us with devoutest wonder as we behold the fulness of wisdom that the atoning grace of God reveals.

"The Atonement as a fact is the basis of salvation. The grace of God in immediate operation on the individual heart proceeds upon what that grace has wrought in human history. It is the truth by which men are saved ; the truth revealed in the death of Christ received by faith changes the heart and character of him who believes it. The love of God in the gift and sacrifice of His Son melts us into love ; the holiness of God is seen as alone worthy of our reverence, as it is that which God Himself reveres. The love and holiness of God unite in forming in us a godly character. . . .

"Thus is the grace of God manifested through the Gospel. His free, spontaneous love moved Him to save, His wisdom gave form to His desire, and His power is ever carrying it into effect. Salvation is of God, we come to the Father, for the Son has sought us, shown us the way and even intercedes for us ; and the Spirit brings us home. . . ."

The pastorate at Surbiton was for Mackennal a very happy time. He was not over-burdened with engagements, the church prospered, and he had time to carry out some of the plans he had formed for reading. It was the "growing time" which ought to come between thirty and forty, when the mind rapidly matures, and takes on the features which usually remain to the end. It was at Surbiton that he acquired the intimate knowledge of Tennyson's poetry which served him in good stead for the rest of his life. At one time he could repeat the whole of "In Memoriam" from memory; indeed, the frequency of his quotations from Tennyson is said to have disturbed some of the more sedate members of a congregation not then accustomed to hear anything quoted except the Bible.

The congregation, up to the time of Mackennal's advent, had been worshipping in the Surbiton Park Hall. During his ministry they felt strong enough to build the church to which they had looked forward from the first. Mackennal threw himself into the scheme, helped in the preparations of the plans, personally supervised every detail, and himself placed the top stone on the building. As architecture was one of his many interests, and he had excellent taste, the result was the attractive and convenient building which is still the home of the Surbiton Church.

Immediately after the congregation had resolved to build, Mackennal preached a sermon on "the need of fuller Christian life, in order to carry on enlarged Christian operations" from the text "*Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes*" (Is. liv. 2).* The sermon reflects not only the anxieties which had preceded the decision, but also the spirit in which they had been met and overcome by the pastor. It contains both conscious and unconscious autobiography.

* "Christ's Healing Touch," No. xx.

"We have undertaken new work for God. Believing that He has called us to build a larger house of prayer, we have accepted not only the responsibilities of building, but also the increased responsibilities which the building will involve when it is raised. In every society there are persons given to gloomy forebodings, and it will be strange if we meet with none such. We may be told that there is great danger of being deluded by signs of an external and fallacious prosperity ; danger that our own spiritual welfare will suffer, and the peace and piety of the Church be endangered by our attempt to fill a larger space, and exert more influence in the neighbourhood. Now, without retorting upon these prophets of evil, without asking them whether Christian life and the prosperity of churches are not even more endangered by quiet enjoyment of things as they are, and a selfish spiritual seclusion, let us frankly admit that there are these and other perils. We shall be tempted to rest in our efforts, as though they were themselves piety. We may find that attention to minute details, and the wear and fret of the business engagements in which we are involved, threaten to impoverish our spirits, tend to call us from communion with God and meditation on His truth. What then? Though this is a temptation it is by no means a necessity. The danger is here, but not only may the danger be averted, our work may itself lead us into fuller communion with God, into deeper earnestness in personal, spiritual, and social religious life. How shall we avoid the danger? How improve our undertaking as a means of grace? How shall we work so as not only to build a larger house for God and to do more for our neighbourhood, but likewise grow in grace by our very labour? These are the questions to which I hope now to suggest a few practical hints by way of answer.

"We must bear constantly in mind that this is work for God. The ground on which the building will stand has been purchased free of all incumbrance, and made over for the service of God for ever. The church will be built, not to last your time or mine, but to stand for many generations, and it will be given up to God. While stone and mortar shall hold together, it will be God's house. Once put in trust for Him, it can never be recalled. So long as the laws of our country remain to protect Christian congregations, the building will be God's. Gifts once consecrated to this purpose will remain consecrated ; the money cannot become again the property of the giver ; never again will it be applied to business, or to any of the lower ends of life. The language of the trust deed may remind us of another fact ; the house will be for God's glory, not for our comfort or honour. We are building, not that you may have more roomy pews, nor that we may

delight our eyes with graceful forms and pleasant colours ; we shall meet for worship in God's house, not in our own. It will not be our joint-stock building, we make it over to God. Nor are we building for denominational glory : not at all to vindicate the right of Dissenters to Gothic arches and to spires. If we build beautifully, it is because we desire to honour God with what is most beautiful and best. The gift is hallowed, for it is God's ; 'the temple sanctifieth the gold.'

"The sense of consecration should belong, not only to the gifts of money that are offered, but also to those of time and thought and care. One petition should never be forgotten in our prayers for the success of our effort ; that architect, and builder, and committee of management, and all that look at the progress of the work and offer suggestions, may be under the constant conviction that they are working for God. So far as we have gone, I heartily believe we have been so animated ; we have come to our decisions, persuaded that what is fittest for our sacred purpose is the fittest offering we can make to God. And if this conviction continues to influence us, we may be sure that there will be unremitting attention, constant care ; we may hope also for a successful issue.

"And, because it is for God that this house is to be built, it shall be as beautiful as we can make it. Remembering that we are serving God in the erection of a Congregational church, that we have to provide accommodation for so many hundreds, who shall see one minister and hear his voice, and who, feeling each others' presence, shall enjoy in their worship the 'communion of saints,' we will provide that accommodation in as graceful a form as possible. The building shall be as beautiful as we can afford ; and, if there should even seem to be a lavish expenditure, after Christ's commendation of the gift of the precious ointment poured on Him, and the broken alabaster box, who shall dare ask, with Judas, 'To what purpose is this waste?' Our Lord will not accept for His service money unjustly taken from the wants of family or creditors ; but money taken from ourselves He will accept. Deny yourself, and your Master will welcome the gift of love. It is strange how people who believe in the Bible that speaks of the 'beauty of holiness,' who believe that God ordained the building of the 'holy and beautiful house' on Mount Zion, can talk as if now-a-days there could scarcely be holiness and beauty together. Looking at churches with their goodly stones and buildings, they say, 'What do you mean by your spires and columns and arches ? do you think God is pleased with your prettinesses?' Well, we only know God from the Bible and from His world ; and the Bible tells us 'that God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was

very good.' I suppose that means that the wide sweep of green meadow and yellow corn-field is good; good in its freshness and its bowing grace, as well as in the fact that it will sustain so many beasts and men. God is surely pleased with the apple-blossom, as well as with the apple-fruit, with the purple of the grape and its rich odour, as well as with its sweetness and its strength. We see what God has done to please us. He has made us 'glad with His works.' He has not thought it beneath Him to make a beautiful world for men. Shall not our grateful offerings be like His gracious gifts?"

The character of Mackennal's public ministry at Surbiton may be fairly estimated from the volume of sermons entitled "Christ's Healing Touch," which was "affectionately dedicated to the congregation meeting at Surbiton Park Church." The sermons attracted a good deal of attention at the time of publication, and still impress a reader as original, fresh, and often beautiful. They are, perhaps, too subjective for popularity, but there are passages of permanent expository value, and they are faithful throughout to a noble Christian ideal of character.

It is one of the fine qualities of a young man's sermons that they are written under the stimulus of opening views of life; and these sermons ring repeatedly with the note of a vigorous Christian manliness which then and later came so naturally to Mackennal. They contain quotations from Browning which are probably among the earliest pulpit quotations from that poet. One extract may be permitted. After quoting Baxter's couplet—

"I preach as one who ne'er shall preach again,
And as a dying man to dying men,"

and justifying it as an "exact description of his natural spontaneous feeling," he goes on* :—

"But here is a young man full of health and vigour. His rate of insurance is calculated on the probability of his living thirty, forty, or

* "Christ's Healing Touch," p. 228. Edition of 1871.

fifty years. He is radiant and buoyant. God has put in him the hopefulness and spring which come of a robust frame and sound lungs. He is, while working for to-day, also fitting himself for prolonged service. He believes that he will see many days, and speaks and acts under such a conviction. While older men dwell much on the kingdom in the heavens, he thinks more of the coming of God's kingdom upon earth. While older men are saying that 'the time is short,' and utter the warning 'it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not' ; 'and they that buy, as though they possessed not' ; the chorus of his life is 'whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.'

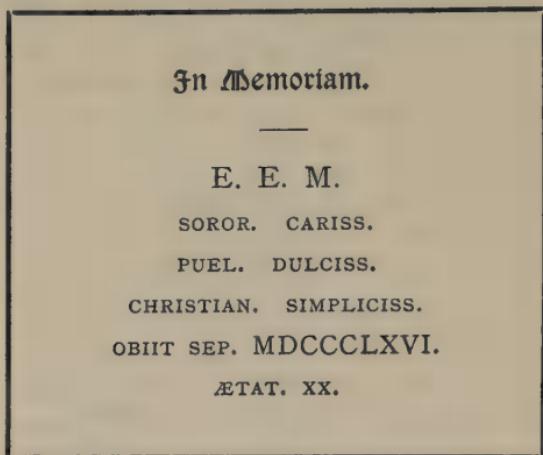
"Now, why should not such a one say—

"I preach, as hoping oft to preach again,
And as a living man to living men ?"

"Why should older, death-expecting persons force his fresh vitality and conscious vigour as new wine into an old bottle ? If death has truths to reveal to us, so has life. Some things are better seen by one on the verge of the grave, others by him who is strong in the hope of long life. The one sees that 'the world passeth away,' the other 'desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good.' There are some facts of life which only the sound and vigorous can appreciate. There are other facts best apprehended by the dying. There is a work to be done by the young, and God has given them the impulses for it. If you try to school them into the mode of feeling which is natural, and therefore true, to the invalid or the aged, you will ruin them. You will destroy the freshness of feeling by which God is fitting them for their special service ; and you cannot give them the earnestness and tone of those near death. It will never be to them more than a lesson they have learnt ; their words will have no power. Their native energy will be always breaking through their conventionalities ; the 'new wine' will 'burst the old bottles,' and the wine will 'be spilled, and the bottles perish.' Put the 'new wine' into 'new bottles,' and both will be 'preserved.'"

At Surbiton, Mackennal lost both his mother and sister. The latter, a girl of twenty, had gathered round her the family affection and tenderness which belong to an invalid sister, and her loss was deeply and enduringly felt by her

brother. The fifth sermon in his volume “Christ’s Healing Touch” bears the dedication:—



His sisters, of whom there were three others, continued to live with him till his marriage.

Among the publications of this period is one in which Mackennal appears in company with Dean Stanley, R. W. Dale, and the acknowledged leaders of London Nonconformity, Henry Allon, Edward White, Samuel Martin, and Mark Wilks. It is a collection of addresses to working people, published in 1867, occasioned by a conference held in London to consider the causes of the alienation of the working-classes from religious institutions. The criticisms made from the side of the “working-classes” raised the perennial grievances—the existence of a state church and its abuses, the demands made on hearers by sermons, the lives of church members, the unpractical teaching of a creed instead of the preaching of the gospel as life and reality, the inconsistencies of professors of religion, of whom some were known to be bad masters, and others dishonest servants; it was alleged that ministers, if supported by their people, preached only

what they thought agreeable to their hearers, and turned churches into “religion shops.” The system of pews and free sittings, the length of time a working-man might be kept waiting for a seat, and the differential treatment of rich and poor were quoted as justifying working-men in holding aloof from churches. The rooted and deep distrust felt towards the middle and higher classes was fully expressed, and the churches supported by them were involved in their condemnation.

Mackennal’s contribution to the discussion is not only weighty and relevant still, it is also interesting as showing how thoroughly alive his mind was already to the issues involved in the discussion.

“ . . . My first feeling on hearing of this suggested conference, was one of hesitancy in accepting the presumed fact. It is unsafe to mark men off into sharply defined classes. The difference between piety and impiety is a difference between man and man. It exists within the different ranks of society rather than between them. There are devout men of all grades and callings, and there are also in all a large number of undevout. In every church which I have known, working people have been among its most valued members; their reverent spirit making them worthy leaders of worship in prayer meetings, their counsel sought and prized in plans of Christian labour, their help in gift and service as freely rendered and accepted as that of men of any other class. Among working people, as among others, pride and prosperity beget indifference to God and hardness of heart, while sorrow and humiliation make them cry out for the gospel of consolation. When God’s hand is lifted up in kindness, they will not see, but in trouble they visit God, they pour out a prayer when His chastening is upon them.

“ ‘There is no God,’ the foolish saith :
 But none, ‘there is no sorrow’;
And nature oft the cry of faith,
 In bitter need will borrow.
Eyes which the preacher could not school,
 By wayside graves are raised ;
And lips say, ‘ God be pitiful,’
 Who ne’er said, ‘ God be praised.’

"If, again, it be true that, in the south of England at least, 'the large majority of skilled artisans are alienated from religious institutions, and indifferent to public worship in the churches,' there is one consideration that will prevent our too hastily concluding that these are actually more irreligious than the classes above them. The middle classes of England are most distinguished for church-going habits, and these classes are perhaps, more than any other, bound by conventionalism. It is one of their traditional proprieties to be associated with some place of worship. But there are not wanting indications that many come into all our churches who would not be found there, were they less influenced by the respectabilities ; that many are there rather from habit and regard for appearances, than from real respect for Christ's ordinance of social worship and real desire for Christian edification. . . ."

He points out that the law of Christ's church is a law of unity in diversity, different callings for men, different gifts conferred upon them. The church is God's ideal of humanity. Christian character is itself the highest manifestation of the Spirit, and it is given for the common profit. What is the gracious spirit worth if we are not enabled to endure misunderstanding of our motives and doings ; to bear accusations brought against us, untrue it may be, and even ungenerous ; to suppress our impatience at criticisms on defects in our Christian work, unqualified even by any recognition of our earnest desire to amend them.

"We must admit that our Christian profession is far in advance of common Christian practice. . . . We must admit the temptation a congregation is under to demand of a minister to preach according to their liking, and the minister's temptation to seek to please his people instead of only thinking how to preach his Master's gospel, and to reprove, rebuke, exhort, and teach with all patience and diligence. Alas ! we need no man to come and testify to us of these dangers. We feel them ; we must not resent this somewhat harsh reminder of them. Let us learn from those who smite us. . . .

"Let us learn too, how unchristian is any feeling of class pride, or exclusive sympathies. I have said what I think about the broad and sweeping charges made under this head. Let me add, that we are under

the constant, baneful temptation to become as exclusive as we are represented to be. Do not let us think that any arrangement of our churches, however open, that any announcement of our readiness to welcome all, even the poorest, into our midst, will secure us against the constant influences of a world that values wealth and refinement and fine clothing, and knows nothing of the deeper realities of the human soul and the gospel of Christ, the sanctities of a common godly character, the oneness of our redemption, in the presence of which there is neither rich nor poor, employer nor workman, master nor servant, learned nor illiterate. It is of no use to remove the doors from our pews, if with ungracious spirit we sit there. Every pew might be taken away, and every chair might be rigidly like every other chair, yet if men in their hearts are valuing themselves on their social rank, the exclusive spirit will be as operative as ever. We can only cure this by constantly remembering the law of the unity of Christ's Church and Christ's purpose, and by acting, feeling, living in the remembrance. It is the man and not the position Christ regards ; it must be even so with us. It is the spirit with all its needs, and all its fitness for the gospel, which He reverences. If we are one with Him in such regard, bye-and-bye we shall outlive all this suspicion, and the common people will hear the gospel gladly.

“Nothing but the gospel of Christ can overcome the mutual alienation of ranks which is now so painful a feature of English society. The feeling is not confined to the working classes ; these are regarded with suspicion by those above them. Partial laws are retained on our statute book, and partial representation in Parliament is justified, avowedly because the labouring community is not trusted. Those who believe the gospel will most effectually serve their country by proclaiming to all that the spirit of brotherly confidence is the Christian spirit, and that exclusiveness and distrust are most unchristian.

“We must not think for a moment of the formation of ‘Working Men’s Churches’ ; these, whether organised by the labouring classes themselves or by others for them, would but perpetuate the evil against which the Church of Christ should be a constant protest. This feeling of distrust, with all its sad results, will not pass away in a day, but it will disappear before unwavering fidelity to Christ in His law of the church and of humanity. Let us constantly seek that everything in our church organisation and personal life be as pure, as real, as Christian as we can make it. We are called anew to ‘patient continuance in well-doing,’ to ‘bear one another’s burdens,’ to long forbearance, and the various activities of a charity that looks

on all men in the light of the gospel, valuing them because they are men, created in Christ's image and redeemed by Christ's blood. As Christ liveth and reigneth ever, His Spirit shall at length prevail."

The part which Mackennal took in this public discussion indicates that he had already outgrown the limitations of a South London suburb, where religion was to many chiefly a palatable condiment along with the other pleasures of the place. Those who feel the creative and formative powers of a spiritual religion naturally seek a sphere where those powers may have free play.

It was while Mackennal was in Surbiton, in the year 1867, that he met the lady who became his wife. Among the members of his congregation was a Mrs. Wilson, a Scotswoman, who on account of her deafness sat near the pulpit. With her, about this time, appeared a young widow in the first interest and charm of a manifestly premature widowhood. This was her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Colin Wilson, daughter of the late Dr. Hoile of Montrose, lately left a widow by the death of her husband after a few months of married life. Mr. Mackennal became a frequent visitor at Mrs. Wilson's house. Mr. Carvell Williams, who was then one of the deacons of the church, recalls how one day Mr. Mackennal met him as he came out of the Surbiton station that he might himself be the bearer of the news that "he had made a proposal of marriage to Mrs. Colin Wilson and had been accepted."

It is said that the only person who withheld congratulations was the chapel-keeper, who objected that it was not fair to the unmarried ladies of the congregation for the minister to marry a widow. "Perhaps," said Mackennal; "but if you put a pretty widow right under the pulpit what can you expect?"

In the summer of 1867 Mrs. Colin Wilson became Mrs. Mackennal, the marriage taking place at Montrose. On

their marriage tour they visited Italy, and Mackennal was deeply influenced by a sermon he heard in the Cathedral of Milan, from an eloquent preaching friar. The subject was "The Barque of Peter," and the preacher dwelt on the Church in four aspects—One, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Noting his fervour and earnestness, the young English minister asked himself, "How is it that while I believe in a purer doctrine of the Church, I have never felt any enthusiasm for it?" On returning he found on his table a letter asking him to attend an ordination service and deliver an address on the constitution of the Christian Church. From that time the idea of the Church as a spiritual reality in unity took possession of him. Long afterwards, in his Carew lecture at Hartford Theological Seminary, he told the story of the friar in Milan Cathedral. "That hour," he said, "has affected my whole ministry."

Mrs. Mackennal was a gentlewoman of a singularly sweet and gracious temperament. She had been brought up, as many Scotswomen are, to form her own judgment on men and things and books, and her own likes and dislikes were both clearly defined and admirably expressed. The following sentences are taken from some of her letters written before marriage, which have been preserved. They serve to give distinctness and outline to her character, and no one who reads them will have any doubt that among the influences which made Mackennal what he was in public and private action, must be reckoned the character and disposition of his wife.

"I do not think you need fear my judging you contentious or narrow-minded, even if you do think it necessary to fight, but I trust at the same time you may never find it necessary. I don't think a minister should, unless for the truth, when we ought all, I suppose, to take our part; remember controversy is always to me another word

for fighting, the weapons only being different. And you know how I love peace."

"Thanks for the *Noncon.* I do hope that article on the 'Imperative Mood' is not yours. I have not read it, so should not speak, but the title is alarming, and sounds like strong measures."

The postscript adds :

"I have read the 'Imperative Mood,' and agree heartily with the writer as to the difficulty of *bearing sway.* I was certainly never taught anything but to obey, and have always a great incapacity for the other thing. I must learn."

"Did you preach an Easter sermon? Don't you think that day might still be kept. There is something very joyous in the words, 'The Lord is risen,' and on that day they seem to come with great power."

"You could not have found one who loves more to remain all my days in one house than I do. Changing even a bit of furniture is always a struggle with me, partly because I get fond of things and places I am used to, and partly because I have an old-fashioned idea that one generally changes for the worse. You see I am thoroughly conservative—born one—as you would say."

Mrs. Mackennal's later years did not disappoint the promise of these letters. She entered with intelligent sympathy into all her husband's work, and her quick sympathy and quiet decisiveness gave her an influence as a pastor's wife which is denied to some who more obtrusively "bear sway."

CHAPTER IV

LEICESTER, 1870—1876

“Those gifted young men, whose angels do always behold the face of the Father who is in Heaven.”—ALEXANDER MACKENNAL.

MACKENNAL became minister of the Gallowtree-gate Church, Leicester, in 1870. The church, which originated in 1823, occupied a large building eccentrically situated off the thoroughfare known as Gallowtree-gate. The building is invisible from the street, separated from it by a tortuous passage about one hundred yards in length, and is only reached by a right of way which leads through a stable-yard. Mackennal's predecessor had been James Allanson Picton, afterwards member of Parliament for Leicester for some years, who had succeeded in filling the church, in spite of its situation, by his brilliant personal gifts and by appealing to the strong political interest of the Leicester working-men. The influence which the church wielded in Leicester life is illustrated by the fact that five mayors—three in close succession—were drawn from its members; one of its members was William Baines, the “Leicester Martyr” who was imprisoned for nine months for refusal to pay the church rate.

As the pastor of such a church, Mackennal found himself in a position of influence in the town, and he threw himself with energy into its vigorous municipal and political life. For Free Churchmen it was a time of high

hopes and strong enthusiasms. In 1870 School Boards came into existence, and they were accepted as the symbol of the beginning of a new era. With popular education, and disciplined intelligence taking the place of crass and conscious ignorance, the future of churches popular in their form of government and appealing to intelligent conviction rather than traditional conservatism, seemed bright indeed. Edward Miall had been minister at Bond Street, the oldest Congregational Church in Leicester, for some years, and there as elsewhere, had succeeded in impressing his principles on a generation of men eager to bring the political system of the nation into conformity with the principles of a spiritual Christianity. It was a bracing atmosphere for a strenuous man, and Mackennal at the time seems to have enjoyed it.

He was asked to stand as a candidate for the first School Board, but he had thought out his principles on the question of religious teaching in public schools during the controversy, and had a conscientious objection to the Cowper-Temple compromise; this remained with him to the end, and determined his attitude in the last stormy educational conflict which darkened the sunset of his life. His position is perhaps best understood when it is remembered that the attitude of Anglicans and Non-conformists has, in some respects, been exactly reversed during the thirty years of the existence of School Boards. In 1870 the Church of England desired what is now called undenominational Bible teaching, and forced it on the country. Nonconformists had been accustomed to base ethical teaching on definite religious instruction, though of course, of another character from that which now goes by that name; they accepted unwillingly the compromise which they have recently appeared to defend as though it embodied their principles. The following statement of

Mackennal's position appeared in the *British Weekly* in 1898:—

“The teaching of the Bible in Board Schools is satisfactory to those who believe that the teaching of the Christian ethics and the history of the Bible is good in itself, and who are indifferent as to its relation to Christian doctrine. It is satisfactory to those who recognise in it a basis for the further doctrinal teaching of the churches. It is not satisfactory to those who believe that this ethical and historical teaching is insufficient, and even dangerous, without a basis of Christian dogma. This is the belief of Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and some Wesleyans. It was the position of the Congregational Board of Education and the Voluntary School Association fifty years ago. I am sure that Samuel Morley, Sir Edward Baines, Sir Charles Reed, Edward Miall, and Henry Richard were conscientious men, and they were all supporters of these two associations. I am not going to dismiss the same plea of conscience when it is put in by Roman Catholics and Anglicans to-day.

“So strongly have I always felt this difficulty that I refused, in 1870, to be nominated for a seat on the Leicester School Board. And, although I was manager of a purely voluntary school in Surbiton, I have never been, and I would not be, a manager of a British school accepting the Government grant.

“A simply secular school system seems to me also a violation of the conscientious convictions of many. It has, moreover, been practically rejected by the country. The liberty to found secular systems has been extended to all the ratepayers, and the result has been that we have scarcely a secular school in the country. May we not fairly say that it has been rejected owing to scruples of conscience on the part of the body of ratepayers? . . .

“Meanwhile, let me say that the plan which commends itself to me for the solution of the present educational difficulty has two fundamental principles—efficient local representation (local control for every school receiving public money) and the frank recognition of schools of different types. It will be a very tedious, if it does not prove a hopeless task, to bring into accord the various theoretical demands of differing consciences; but it is a matter of immediate concern to check school managers when they inflict wrong on the parents' consciences, and indignities on the children, in the actual conduct of their schools.”

Although he did not stand as a candidate himself he took

an active part in the election of the first School Board, and followed its work with constant interest. He had pre-eminently the "public mind" which takes to heart as a personal matter the corporate doings of the civic or national body, and he expressed himself freely, though never in the firebrand fashion, on such matters in the pulpit. It is remembered that on one occasion he had noticed that certain brickfields close to the town were being filled in with rubbish. He described the process in a sermon: "In a few years," he said, "those fields will be built upon, the foundations of the houses will rest upon the rubbish now being tipped there, and the houses will be hotbeds of typhoid and diphtheria." The hint was sufficient; no more rubbish was tipped on the brick-fields.

He urged on his people the duty of undertaking work among the poor of Leicester, and by sheer persistence dissipated the common obstacles of inertia and indifference. The result was the establishment of the Sanveygate mission as the joint work of the Gallowtree-gate Church and the Leicester County Union.

Mackennal's pulpit ministry was cordially appreciated by those who attended the church. They felt the distinction of its dignified form, and the power of its spiritual substance; many of them grew under his hand, and both owed and owned a life-long debt to him for their first grip of spiritual truth. But the topographical limitations of the church were greatly against its growth, and Mackennal found the people unwilling to think of deserting the accustomed site for a new and better one. Nevertheless the church prospered, and its minister, though not satisfied, was willing to accept such instalments of satisfaction as came to him. The letters of this period are the letters of a happy people.

In 1874, Mackennal writing to his congregation says:—

“We have had a year of peaceful, and in some respects prosperous, Christian activity. Many of you have been ready for every good work ; some have been ‘instant in season and out of season’ ; I have scarcely made one appeal for personal Christian service that has not been responded to. My own labours have been lightened by the cheerful co-operation of several, and the sympathy of all.”

As often happens, the ministry which is spiritually most profitable to those within the church did not attract the large crowds of outsiders which are sometimes taken for tokens of brilliant success. The letter continues:—

“Our principal source of discouragement has been the lack of numbers. Our congregations have very slightly, if at all, increased during the year. The additions to the church have just balanced our losses through death and removal. Several of those formerly distinguished for regular attendance are now frequently absent because they are engaging in evangelistic work in other parts of the town, and other congregations than our own are reaping the benefit of their labours. I cannot regret this ; assuredly I do not repent having urged you to consider the neglected condition of some parts of our town, and claimed your interest in the work of church extension. But I would beg you to see to it that our own congregation is not impoverished because of our care for other districts. Those of you who are not labouring in other departments of service might, by personal invitation and influence, do something to increase the congregation at Gallowtree-gate. I would press on you to undertake this as a work of conscience. See to it, also, that by welcoming strangers into your pews, and by kind attention to them during and after the services, you make them feel at home among you. The drawing away of attendants at other places of worship would be a thing worthy of rebuke instead of commendation ; but in your places of business, and your families, and in the circle of your acquaintance, as well as in the streets, there must be some attending nowhere whom a kindly invitation and welcome to your chapel might induce to begin or to resume the neglected habit of public worship. . . .

“Spirituality of mind is not to be acquired at the bidding of some special urgency of feeling ; it is the result of a long habit of self-discipline and devotedness. Again and again have I seen sick and dying believers lamenting that they had, by previous laxity of

conscience and want of fidelity in the consecration of themselves, their time and substance to Christ, deprived themselves of the power of apprehending Christian hope and consolation. And one of the keenest regrets I have observed on the part of habitual attendants at public worship, in times when their health and strength were gone, has been that they had not long ago given definiteness to their religious convictions, and religious force to their personal influence, by joining themselves in membership to the Church of Christ. It is beyond a pastor's power to alleviate such regrets, or to say that such lamentations are either unfounded or excessive."

It is part of the price paid by a minister who succeeds in imparting his own enthusiasm for service to his congregation that, while he makes the church a spiritual home and a noble instrument of education to those who come within its influence, he must be content to forego the numerical and popular tests of success.

It was in Leicester that Mackennal first found his sphere in the denominational work which was afterwards to fill so large a place in his life. He became secretary of the Leicester and Rutland County Union, and acquired at first hand a knowledge of the problem of sustaining small town and rural churches. He set the stamp of his own comprehensive and vigorous personality on the work of the Union. He had the rare faculty of knowing the right man for a particular piece of work, and succeeded in gathering round him a group of men who found in their association with him both inspiration and education.

The following letters, written at the time of his leaving Leicester, indicate the character of his influence. The first is from Mr. Alexander Baines:—

"Jan. 5th, 1877.

"... I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for choosing me to assist you in the work of the Union, and to recognise the value which the training has been to me. Six years ago my feeling and desire was to shrink from work of so public a kind. I now thank you for inducing me to come out of myself, and by giving me

your friendship, prompting me to persevere in that which I had undertaken. If it has seemed to you at times that I have not made the progress which I ought to have made, I can only reply that you have been unaware of the effort that was necessary at first to overcome the disinclination, and that, perhaps where you least expected it, your help has been most valuable.

“I shall never lose the training which my association with you has given me, and I feel that I cannot reward you more than by saying that not once have I thought of throwing up my work because you were leaving Leicester (resignation only occurring to me as a consequence of being ill-mated), and that had I possessed the experience which is necessary for the discharge of the special matters we have talked about, I should have been proud to have accepted the sole secretaryship, that I might help the work which is being done in the country.

“I wish to acknowledge and to show that I regard the advantages I have had, not as having been given me for my individual benefit, but that I may use them for the good of others.

“I shall always look back upon the six years during which we have worked together as among the happiest of my life. I trust that in them has been laid the foundation of a life-long friendship.”

The second is from Mr. Samuel Stafford:—

“The first report you read in Bond Street Chapel you said, ‘I do not know Mr. Stafford, but he has an insatiable desire for work.’ I knew then a man had come into power who understood me and my aims. I have had such treatment from you as leaves it possible for a man to respect himself and stand on his feet like a man. I could not have said this were you continuing here, but now I can say it and hope you will not forget the saying, but thank God it can so truly be said of you.

“On behalf of Mrs. Stafford and myself accept our very best wishes for your success and happiness in the future. When I told Mrs. S. you were going she said the Leicester people were not so wise as she had given them credit for.”

The Union, in parting with their secretary in 1877, recorded that he had served them with an “ability, a kindness, a wisdom and a force of character which have done much to promote the extension of Congregational principles, the strengthening of individual churches, and

the harmonious co-operation of churches one with another."

This experience as county secretary bore fruit in later years. Out of it came the germ of those ideas of a more organised fellowship of churches which Mackennal afterwards advocated consistently, and which he had the satisfaction of seeing adopted by the Union before his death.

Among Mackennal's Leicester interests a large place was filled by the Literary and Philosophical Society of the town. He had an early and genuine interest in natural science, and his own habit of mind was scientific in a degree unusual amongst men in his calling. He liked to make a wide and cautious induction, and to see facts culminating towards a conclusion or a principle, and in his love for flowers, both wild and cultivated, he found a satisfying, life-long outdoor pursuit. For all these interests the Literary and Philosophical Society supplied a natural and congenial atmosphere. He became a member in 1870, and in the following year was elected on the council. In 1872 he read two papers, one on "Local Flora," and another on "Morphology," and also delivered a lecture on Wordsworth. The latter contains a careful and sympathetic appreciation of Wordsworth's mystic reading of nature:—

"He bestowed on all about him such a wealth of feeling that he seemed to himself to be a dweller in another and a higher world than the visible one. He could not admit the notion of death as a state applicable to his own being. 'With a feeling congenial to this,' he says, 'I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality.' In after years he deplored a subjugation of an opposite character; he could see

nothing but the bare exterior reality ; and he looked back with fond regret on the departed glory with which he had been able to ennable the common aspects of the world."

The following year Mackennal was elected a vice-president of the Society, and in 1874 he lectured on "Alfred Tennyson—the Arthurian Legend," this being the first of many Tennyson papers. During the same year he was elected a co-optative member of the Museum Committee. In 1875 he read a paper on "Colour in Landscape" at the annual excursion, and also became chairman of the meteorological section. He provided himself with the ordinary apparatus, rain gauges, hygrometers, &c., for taking exact observations of the weather, and eventually secured the establishment of a meteorological station in Leicester. Other lectures were on "Some Curiosities of Plant Life," and on "Wayside Flowers." In 1876 he became president of the Society, and delivered an inaugural address at the first meeting held in the new lecture hall. When he left Leicester the Society showed its appreciation of his services by electing him an honorary life member.

The subject of the Presidential Address, "Culture and Education," was one into which Mackennal had put mature and vigorous thought, and he had something of his own to say. The following extracts indicate the lines of his treatment, and contain some points of view worth weighing in a generation which has undertaken in a hurry the overdue task of educating England, and, in the main, without very clear ideas of the nature of the task it has undertaken :—

"Educated men have always known that education consists of two factors—instruction and culture ; that it has a double aim, the acquisition of knowledge and the training of the mind in the process of acquiring knowledge. The problem of education has always been

to assign to each of these objects its proper place ; to prevent either from becoming supreme to the neglect of the other. Speaking popularly, however, this may be affirmed, that in the first half of our century there was a tendency to confound education and instruction ; in the present half the danger is that we identify education with culture. . . .

“ No amount of knowledge can be fixed on as necessary for culture, nor does any amount of knowledge constitute culture ; but it is essential that, be it less or be it more, the knowledge be worn ‘ lightly.’ The cultivated man is not cumbered with his information, nor borne down by it ; he is not filled with the sense of a novel possession, nor reverential towards the grandeur of his own acquirements — his learning becomes him like an easily-fitting garment. He knows how to apply what he has acquired ; he never seems to strain himself in the employment of it, nor strain a point that he may employ it. The highest results of education are like the choicest gifts of nature ; the satisfaction is not in having them, but in using them. The charm of culture is that it makes action easy ; its happiness is that action is a pleasure rather than a toil. . . .

“ We can hardly dwell long on the advantages of culture without coming to suspect that we are reversing the relative importance of instruction and culture as our personal aim in study. We may feel another man’s pulse with safety ; we cannot feel our own pulse without disturbing its beat. Culture is the incidental result of learning — no man can attain to it who seeks primarily for it. We must search after truth for its own sake, with a single-eyed enthusiasm in which the thought of self is swallowed up, or neither its right-hand nor its left-hand rewards will be ours. Self-forgetfulness, and not self-seeking, is the highest end of culture ; ‘ love,’ the love of truth,

“ ‘ Took up the harp of Life, and smote on all its chords
with might ;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass’d in music
out of sight.’

“ The schoolmaster may see in the lessons he sets only a means to secure a higher good ; the pupil must give himself simply to his task, or education is impossible. It is quite true that the richest fruit of nature is a well-developed, highly disciplined man, and nature’s object is to mould and fashion men. But nature’s highest ends are secured indirectly — we cannot make her object our object unless we have her impersonal serenity. Nature is sublimely indifferent to you and to me ; we are not indifferent to ourselves. In our thinking, the

impersonal word 'man' becomes translated into the highly personal word 'myself'; so that the pursuit of culture—if such a phrase be tolerable—is fatally liable to degenerate into a vulgar self-seeking. . . .

"Culture, again, often wears an unsocial aspect. Being, as Mr. Arnold defines it, 'the study of perfection,' it makes us keenly alive to our own imperfections. It confounds regret that we cannot reach our own ideal with the sense of personal unworthiness. It genders a feeling of shame when we fail, wholly out of proportion to the importance of the object of our failure; and which tends to blind us to our actual success. A man hampered by these delicacies cannot lay himself out for the enjoyment and advantage of others; he is prevented from doing what he can do by his consciousness that he cannot do his best. . . .

"Nature has never ceased her efforts because they could only be tentative and partial; no sublime worship of perfection has marked her progress, but a perpetual struggle through what was imperfect to reach a more and more complete performance. No such thing as individual perfection is to be met with in nature; the harmony which belongs to the system of things is due to the counterpoise and interaction of objects, all of which are in themselves defective. It may reconcile us to the imperfection of nature, the sight of which has saddened some of the choicest spirits, to consider how portentous would be the development of priggishness in human nature if we saw in the outward world nothing accomplished except by a perfect instrumentality; if we were not constantly encouraged to do the best we can with the poor means at our disposal, by the perception that this is the method of nature herself. . . . An excessive dislike of imperfection is as hostile to individual advancement as to social progress. It is in action, not in thought, that we become aware of our defects and learn how to remedy them. . . .

"'Everyone is now boasting,' says Mr. Arnold, 'of what he has done to educate men's minds and to give things the course they are taking. Mr. Disraeli educates, Mr. Bright educates, Mr. Beales educates. We, indeed, pretend to educate no one, for we are still engaged in trying to clear and educate ourselves.'

"'Trying to clear and educate ourselves'—and the method is self-seclusion from that very sphere of public life, where alone his errors can be pointed out and his confusions be dissipated by experience. Let Mr. Kingsley give Mr. Arnold his answer.

"'You seem,' says the stranger to Lancelot Smith, 'you seem to be very anxious to reform society?'

"'I am.'

“‘Don’t you think you had better begin by reforming yourself?’

“‘Really, sir,’ answered Lancelot, ‘I am too old for that worn-out quibble. The root of all my sins has been selfishness and sloth. Am I to cure them by becoming still more selfish and slothful? What part of myself can I reform except my actions?—and the very sin of my actions has been, as I take it, that I’ve been doing nothing to reform others; never fighting against the world, the flesh, and the devil, as your prayer-book has it.’”

“The cure for the evils incidental to progress lies in still further progress; the excessive self-consciousness, which, as it appears to me, marks the recent advance of education in England, will disappear as we push our education onward; and as we recognise that education itself is a means of living, and not the end of life, that the object of education is action, and that only in our acting can its full results be attained.

“The ideal of education—if it could ever be reached—would be the harmony of its objective and subjective elements, the consciousness of self-development being the simple sense of knowledge gained and of the ability to employ it. . . .

“The end of education is neither knowledge nor self-development, but action, and the sphere of our action is among men. We learn to do all things by attempting them; just as we learn to think by thinking, so in action we learn to act. But this thought of discipline has to be forgotten in larger interests, or the end of discipline will be unsecured. What we do in order to train and prove our capabilities is not action but practice, and practice is the nurse of self-consciousness. A man who is bent on serving or on influencing others is self-conscious no longer. . . . Seclusion may give us delicacy of perception; in society we learn the art of self-recovery. Patience, the tolerant temper, a broadly catholic spirit—these consummate fruits of culture—the study is only the forcing-house for them; they grow strong under the blasts of circumstance and ripen in the world’s large, free life. Toleration of differences is in these days a much over-lauded virtue; it easily degenerates into indifference; it is the foster-sister of arrogance. What superlative merit is there in not fretting because there are other thoughts about than ours—because there are souls in the world unlike our own? Tolerance towards imperfection, forbearance with weakness and ignorance and folly—this is the truly human grace. ‘I fully coincide with Frederic H. Jacobi,’ says Coleridge, ‘that the only true spirit of tolerance consists in our conscientious toleration of each other’s intolerance. . . .’

“The necessity laid on each age of meeting and mastering its own

moral problems is a great safeguard against false theories of education. If there are ineradicable vices in our methods of culture, the flood will come and sweep our methods of culture away. Mankind has a happy habit of breaking its own idols; the spirit of iconoclasm has more than once saved society. The highest result of education is not intellectual refinement but moral force, and every age wins its own moral victories, supplies its own moral inspirations. Culture may be transmitted, but not moral vigour. The outward graces of humanity find a resting-place in the convolutions of the brain, and are handed down in a balanced nervous system. The native charm and easy grace which we see in some men are derived from the intellectual toil and strenuous self-conquest of their fathers; the fathers smelt of the oil, the sons are children of the light; the old man is the better workman, the young man the more finished gentleman. But moral vigour, as distinguished from ethical ideas and virtuous habits, can only come to him who makes it his own by struggle and resolve and toil; you secure your inheritance with your own sword and your own bow. And one civilisation is in advance of another by virtue of the moral force which is in it, and by virtue of this alone. The Cavaliers had a nobler birth-roll than the Puritans, but the Puritans are the authours of a better England. Composure, sweetness, grace, a balanced intellect, a richly-stored memory—these are, after all, not the highest gifts to man. The reason that looks before as well as after, purpose swelling into passion, courage, endurance, directness—these are nobler far. Peace is an element of enjoyment; strife is the condition of strength. The smooth-faced Greek must go down before the furrowed Goth, on whose hard features shall come at length a fuller beauty than the Greek ever knew."

In March, 1881, Mackennal returned to Leicester to lecture on "Science and Literature as Instruments of Culture." The brief summary in the proceedings of the Society is not too brief to retain character:—

"Science and Literature are our methods of studying the two worlds of which we are inhabitants—the world of nature and the world of man. These diverse worlds cannot both be studied by the same method. The facts of nature are measurable in time and space, and may be expressed in mathematical formulæ. But man writes his own history not in the amount but in the character of the work he does, and science has no instruments with which to measure this. Science and Literature divide between them the field of education. Science

leads up to the inclusive unity ; Literature brings us back to individual variety. As instruments of culture the one liberates us from self-consciousness, impresses on us the sense of order, certainty and repose ; the other lures us from the material and the superficial into the presence of the informing spirit."

The second volume published by Mackennal, entitled, "The Life of Christian Consecration," published in 1877,* contains sermons preached in Leicester. The sermons are exact and often profound in exegesis, lit up with a vigorous and healthful optimism, careful in their literary form, and stimulating in their spiritual substance ; but the thought moves on a level which is steadily above the popular range, and they lack the qualities of picturesqueness and vividness of illustration which in Dr. Maclaren's sermons have secured attention for a range of thought not less elevated. One quality which added much to the impressiveness of Mackennal's sermons when heard is less conspicuous in print. He had remarkable power of introducing quotations from Scripture to drive home his points, and they were introduced with a change in manner and an inflection of voice which made his hearers feel that here was the word, not of man, but of God.

In Leicester Mackennal first made some reputation as a writer. He became editor of *The Christian Spectator*, and contributed to it articles which his friends were glad to preserve. He also published a number of poems, chiefly sonnets, signed only with his initials, or sometimes without signature ; but though these were afterwards collected, no copy seems now obtainable.

It is said that on a certain Sunday in 1876, one of the deacons of the Gallowtree-gate Church came to Mr. Mackennal and reported that a lady and gentleman who

* Hodder and Stoughton.

were strangers to him had been present at the services, and had expressed their sense of the privilege of taking part in such devout and helpful fellowship. "Indeed," said Mr. Mackennal, "I hope they will settle with us." The lady and gentleman in question proved to be Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Haworth, of Bowdon, and their visit led to Mackennal's removal to Bowdon.

When the invitation to Bowdon became known in Leicester a determined effort was made to keep Mackennal. He had frequently urged his church, but hitherto without effect, to resolve to abandon the Gallowtree-gate premises, and move out into the fast-growing suburbs. "It is," he wrote, "from Conservatism that the churches are suffering; the Episcopalian are alert, up to the times, or striving to be so, while our people are quite contented to be as their fathers before them were." Now, under the stress of parting, the church was willing to undertake a removal if he would remain and help them over the time of transition. At a special church meeting a resolution was passed that:—

"This meeting, hearing with regret that an invitation has been given to the Rev. A. Mackennal from another church, is of opinion that a further effort should be made to offer to Mr. Mackennal a new church, as an earnest of the deep feeling of love and esteem in which his ministry is held by this church and congregation."

Promises of financial support were given, and an offer of £8,000 for the old Chapel was at least entertained. But Mackennal had by this time made up his mind that he ought to accept the invitation to Bowdon, and was not to be dissuaded. He wrote to Mr. Baines:—

"I shall tell the deacons to-night that I am going. It will be a great trial in many respects for me to leave Leicester, and, of course, I am not ignorant that a new Pastorate is a new venture, but I cannot feel myself justified in refusing. Everything has been tending in this direction for a year past; this change is only the natural consequence

of causes and thoughts that have gradually prepared the way for it. If anything could have over-ridden what seems to me the direction of wisdom and of duty, it would have been the unfeigned love I have for very many people in Leicester, and the ungrudging confidence and affection with which it is repaid. But I am a public man, given up to a particular service, and the claims of the service are supreme. I honestly believe that my best friends here will be among the foremost to bid me go.

"Let me assure you that no trace of mortified personal feeling mixes with my determination. I have heard a word in one or two quarters of regret that my service has not been more appreciated by the congregation. Such is not my feeling. I do not remember a single instance in which any person has made me feel that. That consideration increases the pain, but it also and still more largely mitigates the pain of my parting. . . ."

It is of some interest to note that the proposal to build a new church in the suburbs was not allowed to lapse, and at length issued in the erection of the church now known as Clarendon Park.

On January 28th, 1877, Mackennal preached his farewell sermon at Leicester. It is an evidence of the regard in which he was held that the whole sermon is extant in an unusual form, a copy written by a member of his congregation in a large clear hand.

CHAPTER V

HOLIDAY LETTERS

*“What’s become of Waring
Since he gave us all the slip,
Choose land travel or sea-faring,
Boots and chest, or staff and scrip,
Rather than pace up and down
Any longer, London town.”*—BROWNING.

MACKENNAL was an expert traveller. For many years he seems to have devoted his summer vacation to botanising or sight-seeing in the British Islands or elsewhere. His letters record visits, in some cases repeated, to the Scottish Highlands, Norway, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, North Germany, France, Canada, and the United States. His correspondence, and the letters of his companions in travel mentioned below, give glimpses of one who has the perfect art of voyaging, careful to take little baggage, but to get into it every necessary for comfort; carrying with him a “mind at leisure from itself” to note everything; observing the botany and geology of a district, or its architecture and history; never hurrying over the ground or forgetting that he was to get refreshment in travel; interested in people of all kinds, comparing physical and mental qualities of race with race, or the natural features of one district with another; a good walker, and choosing to walk or climb on foot rather than travel in any other way, and often out-walking his companions; at ease in all sorts of company, and

putting other people at their ease also ; an ideal companion for a holiday and a stimulating friend.

Many of these expeditions were carried out in company with Mr. Alexander Baines, of Leicester, who was for many years Mackennal's *fidus Achates*. In Leicester a friendship had begun based on common interests, for they worked together in church and County Union, and for some years Mackennal's Saturday afternoon programme for the green months of the year was "botanising with Alec Baines." The friendship, instead of being sundered by Mackennal's removal to Bowdon, grew in intensity, and it was not diminished when Bowdon furnished Mr. Baines with a bride. When Mackennal had to pass through Leicester Station on any of his journeyings, there was a postcard to Mr. Baines intimating the exact five minutes when he might be found at the station. They corresponded freely and effectively about denominational affairs, especially at the time of the famous "Leicester Conference," and they were constant companions in their summer holidays.

It was on one of his holidays in Derbyshire in 1880 that Mackennal had an accident, the effect of which may be traced in many of his letters. The family was at Brassington, and he was out driving with his wife and daughter in a pony cart, when the cart upset. Mackennal was discovered with the splash-board resting on his leg, and when it was moved his leg was found to be broken. They were alone on a country road, and far from help. Mrs. Mackennal made splints of her umbrella and tore the silk into bandages which served for the moment ; then a blacksmith was fetched, and with his help Mackennal was carried back to the family lodgings. There for several weeks he lay, at first in a good deal of pain, but slowly returning to health. The physical accident proved to be the least

important part of the event, for the period of suffering, with its demand for patience, tranquillity and surrender, brought with it a spiritual experience which left in Mac kennal's character a permanent sympathy with quietism. The spiritual side of the experience is reflected in his own letters* to Mrs. A., and it may also be traced in the "Sermons from a Sick Room." This little book—which has been repeatedly reprinted—was exactly what its title professes. As he lay on his back thinking of his work and his people, addresses shaped themselves in his mind fitted to his circumstances and theirs ; he wrote them down, and they were read to his people on Wednesday evenings. The addresses are full of thoughts of comfort and cheer, such as come to a man of Christian spirit when the spiritual rises into view out of the sadder circumstances and discipline of life.

To Mr. Baines.

" HOTEL AMERICANO, ROME, 30th October, 1874.

"... And now you may like to hear something about our travels. I have been able to do nothing at Botany. I have only had two plants in my hand, and those were so withered before I could get at Wilson's 'Tourists' Flora' that I did not seek to identify them.

" We have been living in cities ; and until to-day almost wholly in cities which owe to mediæval religion and mediæval art their great attraction. Bologna, Florence, Pisa, and now Rome—that is really our catalogue. Bologna is an interesting, old-world, and old-culture city, the Edinburgh of Italy, though a dead flat and not hilly. The old University building is used as a museum, principally for Etruscan antiquities; we were also shown the anatomy class-room, where Galvini lectured, and Tuliacotius, who invented the Tuliacotian operation by which a piece of flesh from the forehead is made to supply the place of a nose. Malpighi also was professor here, and a lady lectured, too, in anatomy. Bologna has had five female professors, but as the University is many centuries old, the number of eminent women furnishes no argument in favour of the equal intellectual vigour of the sexes. We strolled into a church at Bologna in the evening, and found a service proceeding. Nearly all the church was dark, only a

* Pp. 104—108.

candle here and there enabling you to steal your way along. Over one of the doors, in a gallery high up, with a few not brilliant lamps before it, was a brass band, and the first effect of the brass band to unaccustomed ears was not pleasing. Presently, however, two magnificent voices were heard, chanting a vesper chant, and answered from one of the side altars below. Looking towards this altar we saw that it was lighted more brilliantly than the rest of the church, and going in front of it, we saw that it was ablaze with candles. A large number of people were kneeling before it, some of them the most revolting specimens of human kind ; bad faces, filthy and brutal looking, were set on bodies that absolutely stank. It was one of the strangest sights I ever saw, and I found a good deal of excitement in it. The chants, the dim church and brilliant altar, and, above all, the people —a member of the church of humanity could not but have felt profoundly interested, probably profoundly sad at it.

“We had two other treats in a musical point of view. Waiting for the hotel omnibus at Pisa, we stood opposite a work-shop, where four boys were at work staining chairs. Suddenly these lads began a concert, three of them took part and the fourth imitated the guitar. He struck the roof of his mouth I suppose with his tongue and used his lips, but the illusion was perfect ; not only giving a musical tumb-tum, but rendering the peculiarly passionless chords of the guitar. All the melody was given by the singers, the accompaniment being nearly a monotone. At the baptistry at Pisa we had a rare treat. It is a round building with a dome roof, inside which is carried all round a gallery arcaded towards the interior of the building. The keeper of the building, standing below, sounded two notes with his voice in very slow succession. These were at first echoed, but being reverberated again and again through the arcade, swelled out at last into deep, full and sonorous organ tones. Again he sounded three notes, and these also came back to us in music. More than three notes could not be thus musically repeated, and if one sang rapidly the effect was discord ; but three notes given with deliberation seemed like an organ with a human voice added. My voice produced but very poor music, but then Italians seem made for singing. Even the street cries are not only musical but rich.

“One of the first sights we saw on entering Florence in the evening was a procession, I should suppose returning from a funeral. A banner was carried aloft, preceded and followed by a number of figures draped in white, and with the faces hooded in white, only the eyes being visible. We were greatly charmed with Florence. The Pitti and Uffizzi palaces contain the originals of many celebrated

pictures and sculptures—the Venus de Medici, the Wrestlers and Scythian whetting his knife, which we have in our Museum among the statuary ; the ‘Madonna in the Chair’ among the paintings. I was most interested in the convent of St. Mark, of which Savonarola was once head. This is decorated richly with frescoes by Fra Angelico, of whom I have often heard, but whose works I was till now quite unacquainted with. Anything more beautiful in the painting of human faces must be impossible.

“We have been to-day on the Pincian Hill, from which place we had a magnificent view of St. Peter’s. We have been also on the old Capitoline Hill of the Rome of the Republic ; down at the Roman Forum, where ruins of glorious temples are still standing ; under the arch of Titus and into the Coliseum, the excavations of which are throwing new light on Roman archæology ; and under the arch of Constantine to the baths of Caracalla, one of the most striking and suggestive illustrations of the luxury of Rome under the empire. We intend spending a good deal of to-morrow at the Forum and Coliseum, as we consider that we have only just glanced at them as yet. . . .”

To Mr. Baines.

“HÔTEL DES ÉTRANGERS, NAPLES, 11th November, 1874.

“I am thankful to you for your two letters which have given us more news than we have received from any other quarter since leaving home. We have now reached the furthest limit of our journey, and to-morrow I fear we must set our faces northward again. I say, I fear, not from reluctance to be at home at the end of our holiday, but because I had hoped to ascend Vesuvius to-morrow. The weather has, however, broken, and there is not much prospect of its clearing before the end of the week.

“We had an excellent day yesterday. In the morning we went to Pompeii, where we spent two most delightful hours. The old city remains just as it was when overwhelmed 1,800 years ago ; streets narrow and with huge stepping-stones to cross from one pavement to another in wet weather. The houses reveal much of the life of the city ; bakehouses with ovens and mills, wine-shops with jars sunk in the counter from which the wine may have been just drawn ; and private houses, with their luxury and, what we should consider, discomfort. A few skeletons in the museum, and casts of bodies show in what attitude the people were when the lava covered them. A curious thing in the Naples Museum is a vase or glass jar of olive oil found in Pompeii about six months ago. It is still oil, although, as you may suppose, somewhat thickened by time.

"On coming from Pompeii, as it was still early afternoon, we started for Pozzuoli. This is the Puteoli of the Acts of the Apostles, and is interesting as being the place where Paul landed in Italy. It contains another curious and interesting thing, the remains of the Temple of Jupiter Serapis, of which you will find an account in Sir Chas. Lyell. The temple must have been built within the Christian era, and since the time of its building it must have been about 20 feet below the sea and risen again. The proof of that is that some columns still standing are bored to a height of about 20 feet by the lithodornus, an inhabitant of the Mediterranean Sea, and yet the columns still standing show how gentle was the descent and ascent. From this temple we went to the Solfatara, a half-extinct volcano ; we walked across the floor of the crater to one of the fumarolé, or smoke-holes, where a strong sulphurous vapour at a considerable heat was pouring out with a noise like that of steam escaping from a locomotive. One of the workmen—for the place is an alum and sulphur work—hurled a large stone on the ground from above his head, and the resonant noise indicated a hollow chamber underneath.

"The beauty of the Bay of Naples is not in the least exaggerated. We saw the scenery yesterday under a bright sky ; the sea deeply blue, and the mountains around all day half-concealed, 'winking' as Tennyson says, through the heat, and at evening coming out into distinctness. Naples itself is most charmingly situated, one side of the bay running up the hill side and crowning a low summit with the castle of San Martino. The Naples people are an amusing set ; merry, lazy, easily contented, and not to be trusted in anything. The number of beggars seems to be about 10 per cent. of the people all through Italy ; here it is about 50 per cent.

"We shall return to Rome with regret that we have to leave Naples so soon, for all around is beautiful, and all is classic ground. We looked out yesterday from Pozzuoli on Baiæ and over the hill was Cumæ ; on the table-land above, the Lake Avernus ; we passed by Virgil's tomb, and to-day I drank with my dinner Falernian wine, the wine of which Horace writes. A whole week might easily be spent on the other side of the bay, about Amalfi, Salerno, Sorrento and the island of Capri. But we shall be glad, too, to be in Rome again, for we have still much to see there. We have gone over much of the ground belonging to ancient Rome, but many of the churches and most of the galleries have yet to be seen by us. One of the glories of Italy is its sculpture. I feel as if I had never seen sculpture till I came here. In all the great works, some of which are very small, there is a satisfying sense of beauty, and that whatever the emotion represented.

There is the dying gladiator of the Capitol, a most painful subject, but full of force, tenderness and beauty. My visit to Italy has almost wholly converted me to the classical school in art. It seems as if Raphael, Titian and many other painters were injured unspeakably by having to take Christian subjects and work their genius out on them. On the other hand, poetry has gained in intensity of interest by Christian ideas, and modern landscapes are far superior to ancient. . . .

"I have done nothing botanically and am not likely to do anything. Living in cities, I scarcely ever see a plant; and then my eyes are so weary and my brain too, with the many objects that pass before them in the day, that the work of identification would be too laborious if I did gather plants."

To Mr. Baines.

"HÔTEL VICTORIA, VENICE, 20th November, 1874.

" . . . I was able to get up Vesuvius after all. The morning after I wrote you, it seemed just possible that it might be a fine day after all. So we took a carriage with three horses and left at nine o'clock for the Hermitage, which stands on the plain at the foot of the cone. It came on to rain heavily when we had been out about an hour, but it cleared while we were making the ascent. The view of the bay was exceedingly fine, and down the sides of the mountain were chestnuts in all shades of yellow and orange. The lava streams of 1858 and 1872 were most impressive as a spectacle; the stream of 1858 black and hard, and much the mightier; that of 1872 brown and friable, and not nearly so mighty a current, but running down into two villages which it partly overwhelmed, and still having a few houses and a grove or two rising like islands out of the lava.

"I am afraid that I am writing nonsense to you, but there is an old woman here talking at such a rate to another old woman that it is scarcely possible to do anything but listen to her nonsense. I want, however, to write to-night, for I may have no more time to do so.

"We were very fortunate on our second visit to Rome to see an important spectacle at St. Peter's. It was the eve of the Feast of the Foundation of the Church, and we went over to vespers. A cardinal presided, who made his appearance first in his scarlet robes, and was disrobed and re-robed in front of the altar. After some very fine music, from two galleries opposite each other, there was a procession out of the choir to the high altar and the shrine of St. Peter underneath. The altar was uncovered and dressed for the occasion, and the shrine was opened, showing the silver box containing, I believe,

some relics of St. Peter. This was the afternoon before we were to leave Rome, and in the evening we went out to visit the Coliseum by moonlight. The moon was about a week old, and being rather low in the sky we had a beautiful view of the ruined amphitheatre and the forum. The arch of Titus too at the top of the high ground leading from the Forum to the Coliseum looked dim and mysterious in the moonlight, while the three arches of the Basilica of Constantine shewed most distinctly the panels of the roof which once were covered with figured and gilded stucco. On our way home we stopped at the fountain of Trevi, to drink the water and throw a coin into the fountain, an operation which is said to secure the return of the person who performs it.

“To-day has been our first day in Venice, and a charming day it has been. We slept rather late after our long journey from Florence, and after breakfast we went to take some bearings of the city. My first impression was that the pictures of Venice a little overdo its beauty, but that impression is fast disappearing. As the sun came out, lightening the front of St. Mark’s and the Doge’s Palace, we could see more and more of what the pictures show, and the moonlight view is mystic and changeful. We went across to one of the islands of the lagoon where there is an Armenian convent, and while there we saw the sun go down. It at first appeared right above its reflection in the water, sun and reflection each being a perfect orb. Then it slowly sank, the reflection rising to meet it until a line alone was left, and that too disappeared. Then for about a quarter of an hour the sky was all aflame with colour. The orange of the sun deepened into such rose colour as we seldom see in our English sky, and these flaming clouds were soon crossed with bars of black, narrow belts of cloud out of the reach of the sun’s rays. Where the black touched on the red, it seemed like a cord dipped in blood and dripping with it. After the sun went down, the mist arose, until of all Venice there were but a few cupolas and bell-towers appearing clean cut against the sky. . . .

“On re-perusing this letter in the absence of the chattering I find I have given the impression that we both went to the summit of Vesuvius. I alone ascended the cone and reached the top in drenching rain which hissed as it fell on the hot sulphur rocks and so filled the crater with steam that nothing was visible. More of this on my return.”

To Mr. Jesse Haworth.

“HÔTEL VILLE DE PARIS, STRASSBURG, 5th August, 1877.

“I have reached this place on my return journey; you, I suppose, are just leaving home. My purpose is to go to-morrow to Heidelberg,

on Tuesday to Frankfort, and on Wednesday to be at Wiesbaden, where I may very probably spend a night. I shall hope to see you and your wife, and to see you both looking well.

"Mr. Baines, who has been with me until now, leaves to-night for Brussels en route for England ; I shall be out for about ten days longer, left to solitary communings instead of conversation. To see you and Mrs. Haworth will be a delightful refreshment to a solitary soul.

"We have had a great round—Cologne, Coblenz to Bingen by Rhine boat, Würzburg, Nürnberg, Munich, through the Tyrol to the Stelvio, over to Bormio, then over the Bernina to the Engadine, by the Albula to Constance, thence to the Rhine falls, and on by the Black Forest to this place. We had two whole days in Munich, about five days at Pontresina, and two days here. The remainder has been mostly travelling.

"I think of crawling for the next week. I am within twelve hours of Brussels, but I don't want to be there before Friday night. One day I want for finishing Cologne.

"We have had charming weather, and it has been a delightful holiday. Pontresina especially was able to steal into my heart. I reached it weary, hungry, dirty, and then had difficulty in finding an hotel to take me in. Even under those circumstances the place seemed beautiful. And then there were the four days there, when the aspects of the place grew familiar ; and the changing lights gave new suggestions of sentiment to the mountains and glaciers and woods. We had a charming day on the Piz Languard—Swiss Mont Blanc one hundred and sixty miles off, as well as Monte Rosa and the Finster-
aar Horn.

"All this talk is mere padding ; the real point of my letter is that I hope to see you on Wednesday and to find you prepared for enjoying your holiday and benefiting by your treatment. I hope you will be quite restored. Remember me very kindly to your wife."

To Mr. Jesse Haworth.

"HÔTEL DE L'EUROPE, BRUSSELS, 14th August, 1877.

"Just a word or two before my venturing on the mighty deep to-morrow.

"I had a very pleasant day down the Rhine on Friday. There were two heavy splashes of rain, in the midst of which the hills looked dark and grand ; the greater part of the day was fine, and the afternoon quite clear.

"At Cologne I went to the Hôtel du Dôme, which is quite a

German house. And there was the oddest collection of English people imaginable ; where they had all come from was a wonder. Very likely to them I appeared equally *outré*.

“ It was a very rainy morning on Saturday, and I spent most of it in the museum, where I was really interested in the paintings of the old Cologne school. What a wonderful contrast to the early Italian school ! Equal conscientiousness, and a similar contrast between the beauty of the faces and the awkwardness of the figures and artlessness of the grouping. But instead of the clear-cut and delicate faces of Fra Angelico, there are strong, heavy-jointed faces. Did it ever strike you how typical Luther’s face is of the German saint ? These old pre-Reformation artists, strangely enough, discounted German history by anticipating the character of the great destroyer of their church.

“ I am disappointed with Brussels ; is it because it comes at the end of my journey ? It seems to me that there is such an absence of taste in the place ; and signs of indelicacy meet one everywhere.

“ I must except the picture gallery of the museum. Here, again, I have felt the power of Rubens. Do you know his picture of the falling of Christ under the Cross ? He is not afraid to paint a Saviour actually sprawling under the weight ; and then the contrast between the Christ, and the proud Roman cavalcade above, and the two malefactors below Him. Of course, the painting is not equal to Raffaelle’s transfiguration, the greatest painting I have ever seen ; but only a splendid and exalted genius could have produced it.

“ Now I must cease my gossip ; I hope you will lay up a good store of health. I will let you know of my arrival at home, and I shall be glad to hear how you do. I shall be better able to imagine your doings because of the happy days I spent with you.”

To Mr. Baines.

“ HÔTEL DE L’EUROPE, BRUSSELS, 14th August, 1877.

“ I was glad to get your letter, and to learn that you had arrived safely at home after your adventures, great and small. Thank you also for sending me the *Midland Free Press*. I have spent a quiet hour this afternoon reading it.

“ The Monday after you left Strassburg I went on to Heidelberg, which I found to be a beautiful little city. The town is forced into a narrow space between the hills and the river Neckar ; though only four streets broad in the widest part, it is about a mile and a half long. In the castle yard I met Miss —, who had come so far, and was so charmed with the place that she had resolved to go no farther.

"It was my intention to go the next day to Frankfort, but I heard that there was to be an illumination of the castle the following evening ; so as the place was so beautiful, and this illumination was coming off, I resolved to stay. And I was very glad I did so, for the illumination was charming.

"I went on to Wiesbaden, taking Worms in my way. At Wiesbaden I stayed a day, and then on Friday came right down to Cologne by Rhine boat. It was very delightful, and the places had not lost their charm because I had seen them before. Cologne is a charming city. I went into the cathedral again and again, and into some other churches. I also went into the museum, where I was greatly interested in studying the Alt-Kölnische School of Painting. I found some nice photographs, and according to your request, I am bringing some for you. I bought fourteen for 12s., and as I have duplicates, you will be able to have seven.

"I hope to be passing Leicester on Thursday afternoon at 2.30, Pullman car.

"I don't care much for Brussels. It is not handsomer than Munich, and there is a roughish air about it that I don't like. I have been much interested in two picture galleries, and also in the Hôtel de Ville and the Grande Place."

To Mr. Jesse Haworth.

"HÔTEL DE L'EUROPE, CLERMONT-FERRAND, PUY-DE-DÔME,

"FRANCE, 1st September, 1878.

"On this quiet Sunday evening, which has been the most restful day we have had, my thoughts have been with my people, and I want you to know that we have reached safely the first point of our wanderings. We stayed a whole day at Rouen, which we enjoyed exceedingly. I thought the Cathedral and the Church of St. Ouen worthy of comparison with the two principal churches of Nürnberg, although the city itself is hardly so picturesque as Nürnberg. Running through Paris from one station to another, we stayed a couple of nights at Fontainebleau, greatly to our satisfaction. The old chateau with its spacious gardens is interesting, but the forest is very beautiful. We had a three hours' drive in it, and visited some points of attraction : among others, Barbizon, a little village on the outskirts of the forest much frequented by French artists. Our hotel at Fontainebleau is an old-fashioned French house, with a courtyard containing tubs of oleanders and beautiful petunias. Both in the *salle à manger* and in the salon were vases of gladiolas, flowers to dream over, and admire the exquisite skill in gardening which can produce

such charming results. The most delicate tints of pink, orange, and flesh colour, fading off in the petal into lovely fringes of colour, such as would move Mrs. —— to despair.

“We had a weary and dusty ride to this old town, a city near which the Gauls made a long resistance of Cæsar, a resistance which had almost proved successful and changed the course of western civilisation, and where, too, the first crusade was decided on by the council of Clermont. The city is worthy of such memories. It is built of lava, which gives a peculiar severity to the interior of the Cathedral. Another church is a perfect specimen of the Romanesque of Auvergne. Fragments of Gothic and Renaissance are also found in the walls of the houses. The peasantry of the district are a fine-looking set of people; they are, I believe, well-conducted and prosperous.

“Yesterday we ascended the Puy de Dôme, a mountain between 4,000 and 5,000 feet high, the mountain on which Pascal, who was a native of Clermont, demonstrated the weight of air. (This talk is a little guide-booky, but I always think of this in connection with the Puy de Dôme.) On the summit of the mountain, in digging the foundations for an observatory, they laid bare remains of a Roman temple, and the excavations which have been carried on have revealed what must have been a really noble building, large, massive and severe, built of the old lava of the mountain. You look down from the summit of the hill on two craters of volcanoes of a much more recent period, and all around you are lava currents overgrown with vines and chestnuts, and peaks which are the summits of extinct volcanoes.

“We went to-day into a little ‘Temple Evangelique,’ and had a very simple service conducted by a plain, earnest man. There was a good congregation, largely of men; six English were present, or perhaps eight, including ourselves.

“At Fontainebleau, Mr. Arthur Arnold, the Liberal candidate elect for Salford, came into the hotel the night we left. He was on his way to Aix-les-Bains with his wife, Mrs. Garrett Anderson’s successor, I think, on the London School Board. She is a great sufferer from rheumatism. Mrs. Mackennal recommended your hotel at Aix to their notice.

“Here we have fallen in with a Mr. Zincke, an Englishman whose name I know. He is an earnest advocate of the Continental, as opposed to the English, system of landed property, and intends spending all next week in the cottage of some peasant proprietor down here to learn what the peasant life of Auvergne is like. He is generally a well-informed man and especially so in history and

political economy, and we have greatly enjoyed his society. Alas ! he, too, is a sufferer, his left hand disabled by gout.

"We shall be at Le Peage, Haute Loire, on Monday next, and shall be glad, if you can spare time, to hear from you at the poste restante. My wife joins me in kindest regards to you and Mrs. Haworth. Remember me also to the other deacons."

"HÔTEL DES MINISTRES, RUE DE L'UNIVERSITÉ, PARIS,
"17th September, 1878.

"... We have had a capital tour in a very interesting district of country. The whole region is volcanic, and the elevation of the craters above the plateau is sometimes striking. The plateau itself is very high, and the scooping out of the villages is more striking still. You look over miles of plateau, then comes a valley, and beyond more plateau of the same height, appearing almost as if you could throw a plank across from the one to the other. Here and there a rock of basalt rises in the midst of the valley or scooped out plain, and what is remarkable, this rock will sometimes have the level of the plateau.

"The cities of the South in which we stayed, Clermont Ferrand and Le Puy, were charming. The free life and clear sky and fresh air and beautiful panorama of surrounding mountains never lost their delightfulness.

"Mont Dore-les-Bains, where we were for a week, is high among the mountains ; the valley a sort of miniature Engadine, with no glaciers and no snow, but glorious woods and a fresh green pasture everywhere except on the bare rocks.

"I gathered a few plants, not for my herbarium, however, but for the garden ; the pinks and saxifrages were the most profuse in species ; there was a beautiful anemone, stout in the cup like Sulphurea, only white, of which I brought both seeds and rhizomes, and there was also a great profusion of Gentiana verna.

"We reached Paris on Saturday, and were fortunate to get in at this hotel ; we had made previous application to only four. The exhibition is very striking in its general arrangements, surpassing anything I have seen before, and full of matters of the greatest interest. The general view of the whole from the Trocadéro Palace across the Seine to the exhibition building proper, taking in the houses and the gardens and the broad walks filled with people, is both gay and beautiful. We shall not be able to do the exhibition, but both to-day and to-morrow I hope we shall visit it again. . . ."

To Mr. Baines.

"BOWDON, 3rd May, 1878.

"On my way from Edinburgh last week, I had the opportunity of reading Cox's book, 'Salvator Mundi,' and as you hinted, when you gave it me, that you would like my opinion of it, I am writing you a few lines.

"I enjoyed the book exceedingly, and think it a valuable contribution to the discussion of the subject. The critical part of the book is well done. He may be at fault in too lightly estimating the value of a different critical judgment from his own, but substantially I think his judgment is the right one. A fair and accurate translation of the New Testament would produce on English readers a wholly different impression from what they now receive; the blind horror with which they read of hell and torment would give place to a wholesome fear of the just judgment of God.

"The two chapters on the 'Aeons' I specially enjoyed. You will see in my sermon on 'The Unchanging Christ,' in 'Christ's Healing Touch,' a reference to the doctrine. I have shrunk from the affirmation that this is the uniform cosmological system of the writers even of the New Testament, fearing that it was a little too philosophical to be a common system of thought, but Cox's book has done much to dispel that fear in me. If it were established that the doctrine of the Aeons is a scriptural doctrine (I mean an integral part of Scripture and not a fancy of some of its authors), there would be a new and powerful argument on behalf of the authority of Scripture. . . ."

"BOWDON, 5th August, 1879.

"Would it not be possible for you to go with me to Germany this year? I start on the 25th for Dresden, leaving D. on Monday, Sept. 1st, by way of Saxon Switzerland for Prague; then on to Nuremberg and Frankfort, down the Rhine to Antwerp about Sept. 10th, and on home. I have been taking for granted you might have other arrangements, but not hearing of them, it has occurred to me you might be able to join me."



BOWDON DOWNS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

[From a Sketch by Miss ETHEL HALL.]

CHAPTER VI

BOWDON

*“From art, from nature, from the schools
Let random influences glance
Like light from many a shiver’d lance
That breaks about the dappled pools.”*—TENNYSON.

MACKENNAL's name and work are so closely identified with Bowdon that something must be said as to the environment in which he found himself. In moving to Bowdon, he became successor to the Rev. Henry Griffiths. Professor Griffiths—for he had been the principal of Brecon College before becoming pastor of a Congregational Church in Liverpool—had brought to his ten years' ministry a cultured and scholarly mind, a touch of spiritual genius and great teaching power, and also a Celtic incapacity for managing men who differed in opinion; his gifts had attracted some able men, independent in thought and character, such as Manchester breeds, who were as yet not linked by any strong ties of church loyalty, or welded into united fellowship.

The church had existed as a continuous Christian community since 1839, and had numbered among its ministers the Rev. Henry Christopherson, afterwards of New College Chapel, St. John's Wood, the Rev. H. T. Robjohns, B.A., now of Sydney, the Rev. A. J. Morris, of Holloway, and for short periods during Mr. Morris's illness the Rev. T. M. Herbert, of gracious memory. It had already enlarged its borders more than once.

Beginning in modest premises at the foot of the Lower Downs, erected by the followers of a seceding Anglican clergyman, it had migrated in 1847 to a Gothic building standing in dignified seclusion back from the roadway on the Higher Downs. The old building had been used as a Sunday School till 1859, when new schools were built and made available as a day school under the "British and Foreign School Society." During the ministry of Mr. Griffiths, transepts and galleries were added to the church building, and its appearance greatly improved.

Certain marked characteristics of the church and district should be kept in mind in order to understand the special nature of the work Mackennal had to do.

Bowdon was an old-fashioned Cheshire village which was being gradually turned into the wealthiest suburb of Manchester. Altrincham, which marches so closely with Bowdon that only topographical experts can define the two parishes, is a market town of some 15,000 inhabitants. Between these two places and round Dunham Park the cotton magnates of Manchester had built themselves large houses, beautiful for situation, each standing in a garden which elsewhere might have served for a park. The secluding walls, high hedges, and self-contained houses which meet a visitor's eye are a suggestive symbol of the human characteristics with which Mackennal had to deal.

The church was sometimes described as a "family church," from the fact that so large a proportion of its members were connected by ramifications of relationship and intermarriage. The men who gave it character were men of the best Lancashire type, thoughtful, serious, practical in their Christian habit of mind, generous in proportion to their wealth, alienated from the Establishment for conscientious reasons, and evangelical in training and creed; there were others of less common spiritual

lineage, Swedenborgians, Friends, and the like. One of Manchester's ablest sons and most distinguished writers once said that "the only Epistle in the New Testament written for Manchester was the Epistle of James." The epigram, as usual, overstates the case, but the remark may help to throw into relief both the problem and the value of Mackennal's ministry.

The invitation of the Bowdon Church was tendered by the deacons, Thomas Thompson, John Rigby, George Wood, G. Stanley Wood, W. A. Arnold, and Jesse Haworth, in December, 1876; and Mackennal replied in the following letter:—

*To the Members of the Church of Christ meeting at Bowdon
Downs Congregational Church, Cheshire.*

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"I am now in a position to reply to two resolutions communicated to me by your deacons; one of the 29th November, in which the members of the congregation concurred, expressing your desire that I should become your pastor; the other of the 13th December formally inviting me to the pastorate. Besides forwarding me these resolutions, your deacons have had two personal interviews with me, and I have obtained information from them which has materially helped me to a decision.

"I need not assure you that such an invitation, involving as it does consequences so momentous to your spiritual interests and to my future as a servant of Christ and a minister of the Congregational denomination, has received from me grave and anxious consideration; and I have tried by earnest and prayerful thought to understand God's will and my duty in the matter. I have arrived at the firm conviction that I ought to accept your call, and I accept it with all my heart. Painful as it is to sever the bonds uniting me to an affectionate people in Leicester, and to deacons with whom any minister might deem it an honour to be associated, it is my unhesitating belief that I ought to do this, and this feeling of obligation outweighs all other considerations with me.

"Two facts which have been urged upon my notice by your deacons have mainly influenced my decision, and I refer to them specially to illustrate the spirit in which I am coming among you and in which I ask you to receive me.

"I have been assured that Bowdon offers a sphere of enlarging Christian influence, an opportunity of continually increasing work. You call me to guide your efforts to render Christian service to the neighbourhood about you, to aid you in the discharge of obligations which the Lord Jesus Christ has laid upon you in reference to His cause generally, and particularly to the churches of your own order in England. I shall come to you for labour, not for rest ; to be myself a worker, and to encourage and stimulate you in holy endeavour. You, yourselves, your families, your Sunday Schools and branch churches and philanthropic agencies will be my first charge ; and then, as occasions offer, I shall direct your attention to all those widening opportunities of Christian influence which are sure to present themselves to a church which the Lord is blessing. All our advantages are responsibilities ; we freely receive that we may freely give—this is the lesson which I hope I shall never be weary of reiterating, nor you of hearing.

"I have been also assured that the invitation forwarded to me is not only a unanimous, but a hearty, even an enthusiastic one. I have been profoundly moved by the cordiality of your feeling ; touched, almost painfully, to gratitude and humility. I have thanked God that He has made me a minister of His gospel, which has power to awaken so frank an affection in a congregation of men and women towards one who is almost a stranger to them. May I say to you that I never felt a firmer faith in that gospel than I do to-day ; never felt so strongly as now the constraining force and overwhelming claims of the truth as it is in Jesus ? I am full of Christian hope and gladness. 'I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.'

"Both Christian purpose, however, and Christian feeling require to be fed by Divine inspiration and nourished from the life that is in Christ himself. I therefore ask you to join me in frequent and earnest prayer that He will never suffer our zeal to languish or our devoutness to flag. May He who has, as we believe, guided you to choose me to be your pastor, and me to accept your call, be ever with us ; may He keep fresh in us the feeling of dependence and make our obedience full, so that more and more we may be able to perceive the light that is always breaking forth from His word, and ready to follow Him in a course of enlarging activity and increasing spiritual power."

His own feeling was that the Bowdon church was singularly well suited to be the sphere of the main work of his life. "Now," said he at the time, "I feel that I

have come home." And this proved to be right. Long afterwards he said that his ministry in Bowdon had been a very happy one for him, but it would not have been so for many men. His natural reserve made him less dependent on expressions of interest than most men; his careful and deliberate mental habits inclined him to allow for similar deliberation in the case of others; his personal dominance and magnanimity secured order and respect, and his spiritual sensitiveness supplied his people with a complementary type of Christian thought which they needed more than a stimulating and aggressive leadership.

In 1880, two years after Mackennal's settlement, considerable alterations were made at the Downs in order to supply additional accommodation. A large vestry, which served the purpose of a minister's class-room, and a lecture hall were built at a cost of £2,540, and opened in November, 1882.

The Downs stood in the position of mother church to four smaller churches in the neighbourhood of Bowdon—Hey Head, Partington, Broadheath, and a mission at Mobberley. Broadheath has now become a thriving working-class district, owing to the erection of linotype works, but the others were and are purely rural churches. Mackennal, who was never happier than in his relations with country churches, speaking at their anniversaries and sharing their many difficulties and small but real triumphs, was a faithful bishop to these village communities. He established at the Downs a rural mission board, consisting of the pastor and deacons with the evangelists and officers of the branch churches. This board secured the financial solvency of the dependent churches, and exercised general control.

As time went on and the church became rich in young

people trained in strenuous and simple puritan homes and ready for larger service than the home church offered, Mackennal encouraged them to undertake work in the densely populated parts of Manchester. One member of the church, Mr. William O'Hanlon, was the recognised leader of the Heyrod Street Mission—an oasis of healing springs in the peopled desert of Ancoats—and he recruited the ranks of workers from the Downs congregation. When the Knot Mill church became derelict it was taken over by a band of workers led by Mr. Arthur Haworth, and turned into an effective mission station of the kind which is known as an institutional church. Out of this grew the Manchester and Salford Congregational Mission Board, which is now responsible for the maintenance of several similar missions. Mr. Frank Crossley, whose name will ever be fragrant in Manchester with the aroma of a consecrated life, was for some time a deacon at the Downs. At the Star Hall, which he founded in Ancoats, he made a serious endeavour to grapple with the problem of the slums, by himself going to live among the people whom he wanted to help. The experiment was made at a cost which he was not unwilling to pay—his own life.

The Downs was for many years celebrated among Congregational churches for the liberality of its gifts to foreign missions. On several occasions the annual collection was over £1,000, and in 1900 the church's total contribution to the London Missionary Society was £2,057. The maintenance of giving on this scale over a number of years is only possible where the principles of the stewardship of gifts, and the obligations arising from it, have been accepted in Christian simplicity.

It was natural that one whose religion had been thought and felt out in a convinced and awakened conscience

should have little sympathy with religious impressionism. In early life Mackennal had made a decided stand against evangelistic missions of the Moody type, and, taking all risks, he had both written and spoken against them. One of R. W. Dale's published letters is a reply to Mackennal's criticism of the "revivals" of 1874 ("Life," p. 322). Dale urged that "there are many of us to whom the gift of doing very much in bringing men to God for the first time has not come; we may have the power of helping them when they have found Him, but our work needs complementing. On the other hand, I think there are men who have the power of awakening men who can do very little with them when they are awake—this work needs complementing, too." In 1879 Mackennal wrote again on the subject in a symposium in the "Congregationalist," somewhat modifying his attitude, admitting the truth of Dale's view, but on the whole urging that the harm done by reckless evangelising counterbalanced the good. His critical attitude was based on grounds as noble as the advocacy of many who took the opposite view:—

"Those who conduct revival movements are largely responsible for the mischiefs following them. Such evils are preventible. It is not piety, it is cynicism which treats the incidental evils of a good man's action as inevitable; much of what appears as reverence shrinking from criticism where God's Spirit is at work may really be traced to false and mean views of human nature. The ordinary ministry of the churches has its dangers, but we welcome candid criticism of our ordinary methods, and strive to amend them. Formality is the comparative and worldliness the superlative degree of the composure which characterises our regular church action. The excitement of a special mission has its comparative degree in exaggeration, its superlative in unreality. The recognition of special danger would not check revival, but it should make revivalists watchful, determined to do their work wisely as well as desirous of immediate effect.

"The need of periodical spiritual revivals is generally sought in previous spiritual decline, and in that alone. In reality, the need has a far nobler, a far deeper source. Revivals are necessary to an

advancing as well as to a receding church ; the longing for them comes out of the progress of Christian doctrine, the enlargement of Christian activity, the increase of Christian social influence. The present generation has passed through a religious reformation the importance of which it is impossible for us to estimate. The Fatherhood of God, the truth that 'God is love,' has become not simply the great fact on which the Christian heart reposes—it always was that—but the central truth of theological teaching, from which our theological systems are deduced. The moral nature of Christ's sacrifice has taken the place in pulpit teaching which once was assigned to His physical suffering, and illustrations of the sanctity of law are sought in the constitution of man and of society rather than in the imperfect forms of positive authority which human governments present. Coincident with this enlargement of modern thought, if not indeed the cause of it, is the extension of evangelistic agencies which marks our time. The 'burden of souls' is always pressing on the Christian heart and conscience, sometimes with a force that is distressing. And also the social intercourse of the church with the world is free and full as it has not been for generations. The gospel has so leavened society that puritan self-seclusion lacks its justification. Political life presents itself as a sphere of Christian service ; the past triumphs of the gospel in the world of human thought and human feeling and human doing have laid new responsibilities upon us all. For the Church has advanced while the world has been advancing ; the Christian ideal is as high as ever above the world's ideal.

"The desire to be fit for these loftier conditions of Christian service was the secret, I believe, of the expectation of a spiritual revival which a few years ago characterised so many of the churches. Men wanted to be worthy of their work ; to preach their simpler conceptions of Christian truth with a fervour like that which animated their fathers ; to discharge their larger responsibilities with a devotedness and efficiency equal to that with which the fathers had discharged theirs ; and they looked for their fitness to the Holy Spirit, the author of personal enlargement ; to apply new lessons and discharge new duties they needed a renewal of inspiration.

"I frankly avow my belief that a large increase of fervour and spiritual power has come from the revival of 1874. That revival also left behind it much to be undone. More enduring good might have been accomplished, and developments of doctrine and conduct which we all deplore might have been prevented, if the quality of the work had not been lost sight of in the desire to make a great national sensation. . . .

"I remember a sentence in one of Mr. Moody's reported addresses affirming in the most unqualified terms that the different denominations of the Church, so far from rejoicing in one another's prosperity, rejoiced in one another's decline ; and I know that, both publicly and privately, he urged all Christians to avoid political action as in itself destructive of spiritual life. I am not aware that any of those associated with him rebuked the violent uncharitableness of the one utterance, or pointed out to him that the low political morality of America was due in part to the abstention of religious men from political action. No wonder that an 'ethical revival' is needed to follow a spiritual revival marked by teaching such as this. It is required not only to supplement its deficiencies, but to counteract its evils. 'If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.'"

The whole passage is characteristic of the cautious and critical temper which was in some mysterious way united in Mackennal with progressive and constructive zeal in the advancement of God's Kingdom. In the work of his own church he showed how wisely he could combine the caution of his theoretical position with the aggressive action urged by those who took a different view. At intervals he introduced a special missioner to fill up what might be lacking in his own preaching. He quoted with approval a remark made by Professor Elkanah Armitage that "a church with a reputation like ours for its careful intellectual type of religion might have a good influence by adopting mission services, showing that they were not necessarily fanatical." In 1885 the special missioner was Dr. Macfadyen, of Manchester, whose mission left an enduring mark on many lives. Two later missions were conducted by the Rev. R. F. Horton, of Hampstead. On the first occasion the missioner's singular influence in bringing the religious life to its first conscious self-expression — or, in the older phrase, in bringing souls to birth — was abundantly verified ; on the second occasion this was less manifest, but there was a

recognised deepening of the spiritual life throughout the church.

In 1889 an effort was made to induce Mackennal to leave Bowdon for London. The church at Stamford Hill, founded under the joint pastorate of Dr. Raleigh and the Rev. Henry Simon, became vacant through the removal of the Rev. R. Vaughan Pryce to New College, Hampstead, where he became Principal. The church appears to have agreed before Mr. Pryce actually retired, that Mackennal was the man to fill its pastorate if he could be induced to come. A formal enquiry was sent from the deacons to know whether he would accept an invitation if it were sent. The reply reflects Mackennal's attachment to his work in Bowdon :—

“17th November, 1889.

“Your letter of the 10th inst., on behalf of the deacons of the Stamford Hill Church, touched me deeply, both on account of its generous personal references, and the appeal it contains to special consideration for a church giving up its pastor to serve the churches at large. Had it been in my power to listen to such an invitation as you have sent me, these motives would have had great weight.

“I did not reply to your letter at once. It would have been discourteous and arrogant to have refused to give your suggestions the thought their importance demanded. But though I have carefully and prayerfully pondered your letter, I cannot pretend that I have for a moment doubted what answer I should return to it.

“The fact is, the ties which bind me to Bowdon, and these have always been unusually close, have become closer and firmer of late. My heart is with the people here, and with their children, who as they grow up, become dearer to me and more appreciative of my care for them. And my sense of duty is as keen and urgent in keeping me in Bowdon as my feeling of affection. I do not believe it would be right to disturb our work, as pastor and people ; so many and so intimate threads would be broken.

“I thank you all heartily for your kind letter, which I regard it as an honour to have received. The reading of it has filled me with gratitude and humility ; and I shall always feel a special interest in the church whose officers have shown such confidence in me. The importance of

the sphere would have attracted me, if I could have been attracted ; and I should not have hesitated to trust men who approached me as you have done. But I can only serve you at present by joining you in prayer that the Head of the Church will give you a pastor who shall worthily succeed my friend, Mr. Vaughan Pryce."

The church eventually found a successor to Mr. Pryce in the Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon, of Highgate, under whose ministry the church has become one of the most widely-known and largely-attended Congregational churches in London.

It was during the early Bowdon period that Mackennal edited the memoir and sermons of his friend, G. J. Procter. Mr. Procter had begun a ministry of brilliant promise at Newport, in the Isle of Wight, had over-worked himself ; then, suffering from depression and ill-health, had resigned his pastorate. Although he held other pastorates, and among them that of Mornington Chapel, where he was chosen as a man of like spirit to T. T. Lynch, the remainder of his career was a succession of kindled hopes and bitter disappointments. Mackennal's memoir of his friend is written with the fine taste and sympathy which such a story required. It is the sincere record of a brave spirit battling against untoward circumstances, and achieving a victory which was withheld from him here.

In 1881 Mr. Mackennal's household reached its full complement. There were in his family now two daughters both born in Surbiton, and two sons born in Leicester ; the youngest, a boy, was born at Highfield, Bowdon, eight years after his preceding brother.

About this time Mackennal began to assume the aspect in which he was most widely known. His full reddish beard and curling waves of hair lost something of their colour, and became tinged with grey, gradually blanching into snowy white. His face, always strongly coloured as

to complexion, exchanged something of its look of determination for a look of deeper thoughtfulness. His broad manly shoulders and square carriage gave an impression for many years that he was more of a fighter than his temperament warranted ; this contrast between the robustness of his appearance and the meditative habit of his mind prevented many who met him casually from understanding what manner of man he was, and added an element of charm to his friendship for those who had discovered the real Mackennal.

In 1887 Mackennal received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Glasgow, his first University—his old friend, Professor John Nichol, having initiated the action which brought his claims before the University. This led first to a pleasant renewal of an old friendship, and later to a lively correspondence, full, on one side at least, of amusing and unreproducible *obiter dicta* on current political events and personalities.

In Bowdon, as in Leicester, he was happy in his pastoral methods. Recognising that that office ought to include the teaching function, he carried on a Bible Class for young people which met on Wednesday mornings from 12 to 1 p.m. At these classes he would work through an epistle, or a prophet, and when the course was finished would divagate for a few weeks into Tennyson or Browning or some similar subject. In this way he made his ministry constantly educational and kept himself in touch with the younger folk in his church. He was vice-president of a reading circle in connection with the National Home Reading Union, and from 1893 to 1897—busy years for him—he acted as leader of an English literature class. “ The circle meetings are some of my most delightful memories,” wrote one of his young people. “ I can never forget some of Dr. Mackennal’s talks about the books

we read. He threw such new light on them that certain books are permanently associated with him in my mind."

Another institution which served a similar purpose was the Nature Students' Association, which met during the green half of the year, on occasional Saturday afternoons, for a walk into the country, and for evening lectures or discussions during the winter. The summer walks were pleasant occasions when "the Doctor" in his holiday mood met his own young people and their friends on easy terms, and unpacked for their benefit some of his stores of learning about the plant world.

He had a genuine, almost a connoisseur's interest in children. He liked to note the signs of character in form and feature, the shape of heads and hands, and to note the likeness and unlikeness of children to their parents. A well-known religious leader in the Midlands used to say that a true pastor was not one who vied with the postman in the regularity of his knocks at his parishioners' doors, but one who got into spiritual relations with his people. In this sense Mackennal was an ideal pastor; it was not easy for him to make acquaintances, but his own spiritual life was so sincere and dominant a factor in his character that he was sensitively aware of the wants of others in this respect; and he put diligent consideration and earnest thought and prayer into his counsel when it was sought. His presence in a home stricken by death was like the entrance of a consoling spirit; though the words of consolation came slowly to his lips, his large humanity and practical godliness made his words weighty. The father of one of the brightest girls in his congregation, called to stand helpless while his daughter passed away, unconscious even that in her death she had brought another life to birth, described how in his agony he turned to Mackennal with the passionate question, "Why is this beautiful young

life taken, while I, an old worn-out stump, am left?" Mackennal replied simply, "I cannot tell you;" and the quiet trust in the words brought more comfort than any attempt to expound the counsels of the Almighty; they contained all that a more commonplace man would have said, and a great deal more.

CHAPTER VII

MORE HOLIDAY LETTERS

*“Then follow you, wherever hie
The travelling mountains of the sky,
Or let the stream in civil mode
Direct your choice upon a road ;
For one and all, or high or low
Will lead you where you wish to go ;
And one and all go night and day
Over the hills and far away.”*—R. L. S.

IN 1882, being out of health, Mackennal paid a short holiday visit to the United States with Mr. Jesse Haworth, who tended him with the solicitude of a careful nurse. They visited Boston and New York, sailed up the Hudson to Albany, thence to Niagara and back by Montreal and Quebec. Part of the letter from Niagara is characteristic of Mackennal's accuracy and care as an observer:—

“CLIFTON HOUSE, NIAGARA FALLS, July 16th, 1882.

“. . . We have been under the Falls and behind the cataract at three different places. The first was on the Canadian side. We put on waterproof overalls, looking like Esquimaux except for size, or like coal miners except for colour, and went down to the bottom of the fall. We walked along a narrow ledge of shale, beneath a curved roof of rock, the waterfall being before us. It was not possible to see much, for the spray blew in our eyes and the wind was strong ; nor was the recess of the rock behind the fall deep enough to let us take an easy posture for seeing. Yesterday, on the American side, we made two descents ; one to what is called the Shadow of the Rock, the other to the Cave of the Winds. The Shadow of the Rock is one of the parts where the fall becomes most beaten up into spray ; it was for the sake of going right in among the spray that this expedition was worth taking. We walked along a plank bridge for 150 feet

behind the waterfall, and there were awful depths of shadow in the descending waters. For the Cave of the Winds excursion we had to undress completely, putting on first a bathing dress of jacket and trousers, and waterproof overalls above that. This was a magnificent excursion. We went down to the level of the bottom of the fall ; on turning a corner we saw before us the edge of the American waterfall, a descending sheet of water ; behind this was a deep cave, as deep as that behind the Giessbach, which we went into ; we walked along here over rocks until we came to a part where the cave thinned out ; the waters were falling over us like a shower-bath, we were knee-deep in water, and pushing on holding by the rocks, we came out into the open air again. It is a detached portion of the fall, about 100 feet across ; you are able to walk behind it and cross completely under the cataract. There is no danger in the journey, altho' as you may well believe, there is awesomeness ; and then the amazing beauty of the falling water. The difference between looking on a cataract from without and within is like the difference between looking on a glacier from without and within ; outside you see the mass, inside you see the structure. Looking up you could see how the water had been broken ; it was not a falling sheet of water, but a collection of falling drops of water, some clear, some opaque ; green drops, and white drops falling as if strung together, and the clear light shining through some and reflected from others. Then we passed round on the outside of the falls : over rocks and smaller cascades and in the perpetually rising spray. Once we saw a singularly beautiful thing. The water was falling over the face of a rock, some of it being dashed off from the summit, and some slipping down over the surface of the rock itself. The slipping surface of water made a beautiful green mirror in front of which was an ever changing veil of spray. And all around us were prostrate rainbows ; some large bows and others small, moving as we moved. Sometimes the bow would be a true circle, our position being on the circumference of it, the colours coming almost up to our feet ; and sometimes the circle would be drawn out, in which case, our position was not on the circumference, but in the interior of the bow.

"You will perhaps wonder at my taking the trouble to describe these incidental portions of Niagara falls, and leaving the falls themselves undescribed. But you will understand it too. I can't say anything to you about the falls as a whole. Niagara is too big to be represented ; too beautiful, too wonderful for description. I haven't taken it all in yet ; I never shall take it all in. Indeed there is no point of view from which you can properly see the falls as a whole ; and in the perpetual flow of these waters, one impression is succeeded

by another before it has had time to be fully felt. There is a strange mystery combined with the beauty and grandeur of the spot ; a feeling of being dwarfed and baffled, a desire to grasp it all, mingled with the certainty that you must go away and leave it all without having grasped it. . . .

"We shall stay here until Tuesday afternoon, then up to Hamilton for the sail down the St. Lawrence occupying two days. Then we shall have a day at Montreal, a night between Montreal and Quebec, and then the 'Parisian' on Saturday morning. After that, I shall count the days until I see you all, and particularly yourself, again. . . ."

The following letters illustrate holiday doings between 1884 and 1891.

To Mr. Jesse Haworth.

"FONAB, PITLOCHRY, PERTHSHIRE, 28th August, 1884.

"We have had days so fully occupied out of doors that I have rather neglected my friends at Bowdon. I have had it in my mind to write you and let you know how we are doing, but some excursion or walk has called me, and the post has gone before I have had the chance to sit down. Both at Montrose and here we have had the finest weather, and our life has been lived out of doors.

"This place is one of the loveliest little spots ; a one-storied house on the banks of the Tummel. Opposite to us is Pitlochry with Ben Vrachie behind it. Unfortunately it is rather a damp situation, and the meadows on the other side of the river receive the drainage of Pitlochry by surface irrigation, so that the dwellers here are subject to rheumatic affections. My brother-in-law is quite lame with rheumatism in the feet, and will scarcely be able to live here now he has taken the place. We have had several fine walks, one on my brother-in-law's moor, a lovely moor all covered with heather ; another to Killiecrankie and Blair Athole ; a third, several times repeated, to the Falls of Tummel ; and one in which I guided the two girls and Alex to Ben Vrachie. The views from the hill-tops are exceedingly fine. The boys have had lots of fishing, and killed a great many fish. It is pitiable to see the little creatures hauled in by them ; Harry, who is not a large eater, can take five to his breakfast. . . .

"I have had a little work to do in the correction of proof sheets of a second edition of 'Christ's Healing Touch,' which is being published in Manchester, by Brook and Chrystal. I brought away with me notes of four lectures on 'The Biblical Scheme of Nature and Man,' hoping to prepare them too for the press ; but the fine weather has

been irresistible. I hope I may work the better on my return for this complete holiday. . . .”

To Mr. Haworth.

“ HÔTEL JUNGFRAU, EGGISHORN, SWITZERLAND, 31st July, 1885.

“ We have been having such splendid weather, and the temptations to be out of doors have been so many, that I have written only two letters in addition to those to my wife. This morning, however, we are resting, for we have had two long excursions on following days and we shall all be the better for a little quiet.

“ We spent ten days at Zermatt, and enjoyed them greatly. We are enjoying this place quite as much. We are up here, nearly eight thousand feet in elevation, and the air is fresh and cool, while the view of mountain summits all around us is unsurpassable.

“ We had a delightful excursion yesterday to the bed of the Märjelen See; a lake which in some seasons is fed from the great Aletsch glacier, whose side is laid bare as it passes a valley about three miles long. When the drainage of this part of the glacier is directly down this valley, there is a lake; but this season the glacier drains down its own valley, and we have the bed of the lake left dry. We were able to approach close up to the side of the glacier, with the ice cliffs over sixty feet in height. There were also scattered about a number of small icebergs, broken off and floated about by the water of the lake, which, not many weeks ago, must have had plenty of water in it. The crevices in these were very striking, some of them exquisitely beautiful; and the process of the disintegration of the icebergs by the sun's action was most interesting to watch. We spent nearly the whole day out of doors.

“ The girls are enjoying their holiday greatly, and are looking very much better for it. We shall stay here until Tuesday or Wednesday next, when Mr. Fielden starts for England, and we go down to Aigle to rest a day before going up probably to Villeneuve.

“ The hotels are by no means full, although a great many people are travelling. At Zermatt we saw Pearson, of Liverpool, Williamson, of Withington, and J. F. Alexander, beside spending a couple of days with Mr. Needham and some of his family, including Frances Palmer. Yesterday afternoon I came on Dr. Dale in the lobby of the hotel. He was suffering evidently from his walk up here, but he seems better this morning. He is here with his wife and one daughter. We had a long talk about the Oxford scheme—Mansfield College—to which he is giving himself heartily. Your brother will have received a copy of the scheme as sanctioned by the commissioners; they

have dealt very liberally with the promoters, and have issued a really good scheme. My kind regards to all the deacons who are in Bowdon. . . .”

To Mr. Jesse Haworth.

“GRAND HOTEL ROYAL, SIENNA, 4th December, 1891.

“We have at last turned our faces northward, and much to our delight we shall now without much delay travel on until we reach home again. We hope to be in Genoa to-morrow evening, and to spend a quiet Sunday there. The next night—Monday—we shall be on the line to Paris, having crossed the Mont Cenis. We shall have a quiet day and night in Paris and cross on Wednesday, reaching Bowdon on Thursday.

“We had five days in Rome, not enough to see much, but enough to feel a little return of the old enthusiasm. Our first feeling was one of disappointment ; the old Rome that you remember is gone, and a new flourishing city has risen up, with tramways and omnibuses, and broad streets of showy shops. They are embanking the Tiber ; an ugly—one of the ugliest—suspension bridge with huge girders runs along the side of Pont St. Angelo ; the fields pointed out as those where Cincinnatus was ploughing when he was called to be dictator are gone, and the Cloaca Maxima is “restored,” that is, a new arch has taken the place of the old. The Ghetto is cut through, and the ancient remains, religiously preserved, of classic times are having their surroundings of mediaeval houses and close streets taken away from them. Somehow or other, I don’t like it ! although, as no real relic of antiquity, which can be spared, is sacrificed, those who didn’t see the old will not have any regret. There are many improvements even for the sight-seer. The present Pope is not sulking as Pio Nono did—or as his advisers made him ; he has been restoring churches, principally by cleaning them, and the Vatican arrangements make the visitors bless the custodians. We had five good days, and could have used five weeks.

“But the feature of this visit is our seeing Perugia, Assisi, Orvieto and Sienna. They are all beautifully situated, and the churches with their wealth of paintings are very choice. I have just had a glimpse of the Siennese school of painting—with tired eyes, having looked on far too much for the last fortnight—and it has filled me with wonder and admiration. Sodoma’s ‘Descent from the Cross’ is worthy of all that has been said of it, and it is the typical and crowning illustration of a whole series of remarkable works. The cathedral here is very impressive and picturesque in the interior ; and the exterior of Orvieto is an amazing exhibition of happy audacity in blending together colour and design and work. . . .”

CHAPTER VIII

A SPIRITUAL DIRECTORATE

“A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five pound note. He or she is a radiating force of good-will, and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted.”—R. L. S.

THERE is a chapter in Mackennal's life of value and interest enough to make a volume in itself. A member of his congregation at Bowdon, a lady who had been brought up in the atmosphere of a cultured religious home, married and settled in a distant manufacturing district. She had read widely, and her tastes had taken her to Whateley, Berkeley, Mill, Reid and Locke “at an age when,” as she owned, “no sensible girl would know what metaphysics were.” The circumstances of her changed residence and surroundings severed her for a time from the fellowship of a Christian church, her early hold of the Christian faith was loosened, and her difficulties were accentuated by a sensitive nature and bad health. On one of her visits home, in 1880, she heard Mackennal preach twice on Sunday and then met him at a social function on Monday evening. The occasion was one of the Book Meetings which brought together many of the

interesting people in the Bowdon circle on easy and pleasant terms for the interchange of books and ideas. The lady, who hereafter is called Mrs. A., watched the genial and happy temper which Mackennal brought to the simple enjoyments of the evening. His happiness jarred on her intense consciousness of the "riddle of the painful earth," and when the guests were gone she challenged him with the question, "I know you think—how can you smile? Is it temperament, or have you any rational ground for looking so absolutely happy, when you know what is going on in the world?"

He looked at her gravely, surprise turning to pity, and then said, "No, it certainly is not temperament; will you write to me when you get home and ask me that again?"

It was months before Mrs. A. acted on his suggestion, but from the time when she did so, early in 1880, till the time of Mackennal's death, a correspondence of quite exceptional interest was maintained. In one of his letters he refers to his relation to Mrs. A. as a "spiritual directorate," and that perhaps most clearly expresses the part he played.

He set himself deliberately to lead this distressed soul into the security of a settled faith; and at obvious cost to himself laid himself out to apply consolation or stimulus, argument or illustration, humour, counsel, or food for the mind as she might require. His zeal and solicitude grew on its own efforts, and he spared no labour which his object seemed to demand, till success rewarded him. The letters challenge comparison with those of Fénelon, F. W. Robertson, or Erskine of Linlathen, but in singleness of aim, and continuity of sustained effort, they are probably unique.

The problem which such letters present to a biographer

is not an easy one. On one hand the letters were not written for the public eye, and it seems like an invasion of the sanctities to publish them. On the other, no life of Mackennal could do him justice without them. They contain a revelation of his finest qualities of spiritual insight, sound judgment, and gracious sympathy; they indicate the grounds on which the certitude of his own faith rested; they contain a noble Christian apologetic, as it were, in solution, and in a form in which it may be specially acceptable to other bewildered minds; there are passages in them which belong to the most valuable type of religious literature—the autobiography of the soul; they also reveal, what many suspected, that the external reserve of Mackennal's manner was a kind of armour adopted, consciously or unconsciously, to protect a hyper-sensitive nature. It is notable that Mackennal succeeds in reaching and maintaining a higher level of self-revelation in his letters than in either his sermons or speeches, and that many of his letters are full of the warmth, tenderness, and vivid imaginative qualities which were frequently missed in his public utterances. In such a case it seems a plain duty to take whatever risks are involved in the publication of the letters. Mrs. A.'s first letters, with one exception, were not preserved, but after 1887 each correspondent kept the letters of the other, and it has been found possible to reconstruct much of the correspondence.

In her first letter Mrs. A. goes straight to the heart of her difficulty:—

“May 2nd, 1880.

“... In the days when I lived in a constant atmosphere of Christian thoughts and doctrines and sentiments, they never seemed so entirely beautiful and desirable as they do now, that I seem

separated from them by the dark perpetual undercurrent of fear that they are only glorious dreams, too good to be true, and quite inconsistent with the actual, horrible facts of life or death. How is it that these facts are so ignored, that people forget them so? I realise them constantly, and they are most strongly present just when I might be happiest; present in detail, whenever I look at my babies, for instance.

"Will you please tell me, do you believe, are you *sure*, that Jesus died really, and really lived again? If that is true, our souls have a life of their own, separate from, and prolonged beyond, that of our bodies. Whether that is any boon I do not know. It often seems to me dreadful to be forced to go on thinking even after you are dead. And I cannot imagine a more tormenting condition than that of a mother, watching her children from behind an impassable barrier, seeing them suffer, unable to speak a word or reach out a finger. . . ."

SPIRITUAL DIAGNOSIS.

"4th May, 1880.

"I am very glad you have written me, though sorry indeed to find that your spirit is still so distracted and distressed. I have been wanting to talk to you ever since you were here, and now you have given me the opportunity. . . .

"I think you are taking too much of the burden and sacrifice of life upon you, and very much of that burden you could roll over on Christ. He is the sacrifice, you know, and the burden-bearer; He is the head and the representative of humanity, not we. You ask me if I believe with all my heart that He lived and died and rose again, really and truly. Really and truly, yes, I say, and I believe a good deal more than that, that He came to be to humanity what we have learnt from Him to admire as an ideal and wish that we might be, but cannot—the Saviour, the Bearer, the Sacrifice. If you would believe Him to be a good deal more than anything you glance at in your letter, you might find easier the faith you feel you want. It is easier for some natures, and at some points

in our experience, to accept Him as the God-man, the self-offered bearer of the burden of humanity, and sacrifice for the righting of its wrongs, than to accept Him as simply the divinest and most beautiful of the sons of men.

“That is theological talk ; let me put it in another way. Why should you, frail and tremulous as you are, want to take all the world’s burden on yourself ? You don’t, you will say, only you can’t help the pressure of it, you can’t shut out the vision. But what if you saw that the burden was being borne ? Surely, He sees what you see, feels what you feel ; what lesson ought His calmness to bring to you ? Does not the cross of sacrifice tell us just this—He is carrying all ? And does not the resurrection assure us of this, that the load is not too heavy for Him, the complications not greater than He can set right ? . . .

“You see, I’m preaching to you, not reasoning with you. Your intellect would soon clear itself if you would only cast your burden down ; and you can’t cast your burden down anywhere, it’s too rich and precious for that. But you can cast it at His feet, if once you see that all its value is known to and prized by Him.

“You want the assurance of another’s faith ; you shall have it. Thank God, I know what Paul meant when he said ‘*I know whom I have believed*,’ and I say I know Him too, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him, to keep it all.

“I send you by post a book. Will you read the sermon on Christian Courtesy, p. 235 ? (‘Christ’s Healing Touch’). I send it that you may see that others have been perplexed with the very thing that is sorely burdening you. I am sorry I cannot ask your acceptance of the book, but I am keeping it for my children.

“I am not at all sure that this letter will be of any use

to you ; I think it may be, I think some of the things I have said are things you want to have said. I shall be very glad to hear from you again ; you know you are one of my flock."

THE GRAND ABSURDITY.

" 11th May, 1880.

" . . . Your second letter, with its frank confessions of bewilderment, appalling as perhaps you thought they must be to me, has been very cheering. If words could cure you I should tell you you were suffering from hyperæsthesia ; the word is nothing, but I clearly see from your letter how much physical conditions have to do with your gloom. Your sensitive state is not absolutely one of which I have no knowledge. There are times when I, strong as I appear, and as I am, am obliged to avoid particular topics lest I should break down in the utterance. You would hardly believe it, but I scarcely ever read a novel ; I am obliged to refrain lest I should be unfit for my work. The last time I read one I finished it on Friday night, and on the Sunday both the morning and evening services were marred by broken voice and choking speech. It is primarily, I think, a nervous condition, anyhow it is physical, and I am glad to know that much about you.

" But that is not all ; one ought not to be so much at the mercy of physical conditions. If our religion is worth anything, it ought to bring us some release from this bondage, and I am going to try to help you a little along the way of release. Here, too, don't think yourself solitary. Many men, and some women, of saintly character and unchallenged faith, have remained intellectually sceptics to the very end. Life has had for them a precipice on one side, down to the abysses. It has only

been on one side, however, and their feet have been always on a rock. Dr. Payson, of America was such a man ; the late Dr. Duncan, of Edinburgh (Rabbi Duncan) called himself to the last an intellectual sceptic. I know many who would tell you that they have their own fears and fightings like your own. I don't believe you have the pride to which a spiritual solitude alone is grateful, and so I tell you these things as suggesting a little comfort. To know that you are not alone may give you a little relief.

“ Now, I will tell you why I said if you ‘ would ’ instead of ‘ could ’ believe. I don’t think you are a willing sceptic, but I think you are not fully aware of the part the will plays in religious belief. I say ‘ if you would believe,’ as Christ said ‘ stretch forth thy hand ’ to the paralytic ; not that he chose to be powerless, but until he was moved to personal exertion he could not be helped. And you must venture on believing or you will have no real conviction.

“ You talk about being ‘ *sure*,’ I don’t quite know if I catch your meaning. Are you ‘ *sure* ’ your friends won’t fail you ? or do you wait for an assurance to that effect before you trust them ? Isn’t trust in the nobility and fidelity of our friends, the trust that goes beyond our experience, and which experience confirms the most precious thing in life to us ? If you could believe in God because you had reasoned out that the things which He had taught you were true—these and only these—your trust in Him would be as barren and unsatisfying for the true wants of your soul as your acceptance of a proposition in Euclid. The faith that has no venture in it is good neither for God nor man. It has no moral virtue in it, and God makes no response to it. You would be hurt if you found you were only trusted for what we were sure of

independently of our faith in you ; we shouldn't see much light in your countenance ; you wouldn't show us much grace, if you found that we wanted to be 'sure' of you otherwise than by the assurance of faith, before we would venture to depend on you. *And that sensitive, sympathetic, responding, easily hurt personality is the crown and substance of God's being.* What a wrong track, then, you are going on when you want to be sure before trusting, instead of being sure in virtue of your trust.

"I will tell you what my faith is. There is the objective possibility that all I believe in may be a delusion ; and I recognise that possibility, so far there is a failure even of subjective certainty. But I am so sure of the gospel that I stake my all upon it. I am going on to meet the future, prepared to stand or fall by the gospel. If I find a demon on the throne of the universe, I shall go up to him and say 'I hoped better things of you,' and I think his will be the shame, not mine. But I don't expect that, I expect rather to see One there who will look over my many faults and failures, and who will say, 'Your faith at least was right, well done.' A faith that has no courage in it, that must see all as clearly and as coldly as a sum in algebra ; why, you wouldn't insult me with such a faith as that ; and I'm sure you wouldn't offer it as a religious service to your God.

"After all, there is no great courage in my going out into eternity as I say. I have far more reasons for my faith in God and the gospel than for most of the beliefs I cherish. I am a student in a small way of natural history and a believer in evolution, but the notion that all has evolved itself, with no intelligence to direct the process, and no power to bring it out is absolutely incredible. That notion doesn't demand faith, it kills faith. Then *if there be intelligence and power, it must either be*

diabolical or divine. Now, a very clever devil might have devised a world which should raise up hopes such as those which are ours according to the gospel scheme of life, only to disappoint them ; there would be an exquisite refinement of torture in that. But then we are confronted with this fact, that the number of people to whom the hell of such a revelation would be possible is very small. Most people are tolerably contented with life as it is ; the kind of agony which the clever devil intends to inflict would be as little felt by the hosts of humanity as the sting of a nettle by an elephant's hide. So that our clever devil is to be presumed to have devised the elaborate, far-reaching scheme of a world like ours, considered as an illusion, to torment here and there a hyper-sensitive soul like you and me. Now, it is too monstrous a piece of cheek to suppose that, isn't it ?

" No, the scheme of the gospel which affirms that all is working together for good, that even such sufferings as yours are only the result of an overstrain of exquisite sources of feeling which mean power, and that these same sufferings shall have their result in fuller power, in wisdom and sympathy, is reasonable ; nothing else seems reasonable when compared with it.

" I want to give your intellect a fillip, and even to enlist your sense of humour, in order that your emotional nature may have a little rest. All you say is true—you must have assurance of truth which is so transcendent in importance. You are like Thomas, your very longing to believe interferes with your power of believing. But this is also true—we may exaggerate our difficulties until what is only a call for caution, or an appeal to patience and courage, may become a phantom of disbelief. And such a mood of exaggeration is a very frequent result of nervous overstrain ; so I believe it to be with you. I call you a

Christian believer a little out of sorts, whatever you may call yourself.

“There is also a danger of withholding belief, not from failure in the evidence, but because the thing claiming our faith would be so delightful to us to believe. Now really, the contents of the gospel are a very essential part of its evidence. Faith is the accepting for true that which has much evidence in its favour, this being our ultimate reason for belief that it *ought* to be true, and that is why there is often so quick a revulsion from what seems extreme scepticism to a happy faith.

“You must excuse the fragmentary character of my letter. . . .”

THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

“7th July, 1880.

“. . . Although I regard the Pearsall Smith school as utterly wrong in their expositions both of spiritual life and the Bible, yet there is a truth underlying their teaching which you might do well to ponder. Do you ever think of the trustworthiness of the spiritual life? I remember when I was a young man thinking what a dreadful thing it would be for married people to discover that they were losing their love for one another, thinking also that that must needs be a matter of frequent concern to them. I was wholly unaware of the trustworthiness of their affection for one another; now it never enters into my head either that I shall fail in affection to my wife or she to me. Of course, I’m not always as good a husband as I might be, but the affection is there, and it keeps me right even better than constant anxiety about my words and doings would. I’m sure you read my meaning. Your heart is right with God. I say that boldly, fully recognising your frequently grave intellectual troubles, and I should advise you to

trust a little to the impulse of your spiritual nature. '*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus will make you free from the law of sin and death.*'

"You see, I am approaching this subject from the human, not the divine side. The trustworthiness of the spiritual life within us—that phrase does not suggest an absolute heedlessness and unconcern in presumptuous reliance on miraculous help; but it does suggest that the life may be allowed room and play, and that we may mar our piety by a ceaseless strain of effort. . . .

"You will not, however, misunderstand me, and suppose that if I speak of the spiritual life from the side of our experience, I am therefore overlooking the other side of the truth, Christ's fidelity and the help of God. The spiritual life in us is the Spirit of God in us: its trustworthiness is His constancy. I would use the *a fortiori* argument: if Christ's fidelity as realised in our experience be so manifest, what must it be in itself, how worthy to be confided in in its own immeasurable possibilities? If I believe any words in the New Testament, I believe those words of Christ's, '*My sheep know my voice and they follow me*' (as you are doing, though in darkness, tremor and tears) '*and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*' . . ."

LIVING BY FAITH: THE WILL TO BELIEVE.

"11th September, 1880.

"I daresay you know that four weeks ago I overturned a pony-chaise and brought the splashboard on my leg, and that I have been laid-up ever since.

"I have been wanting to write to you, for you were one of the persons I thought of very soon after the accident. I lay on the hill-side waiting for attendance, and I was

sure that my faith would not fail me through the trial, whatever its issue might be; and having that confidence I thought of you and wished I could say so to you.

“I have more than that to say now. I am sure you must have noticed the reserve of my reply to your question in your first letter, ‘Are you sure that God is, and that He cares for us?’ or words like that. Then I said that I was content to risk my all on my faith; but now I say, ‘Yes, I am sure.’ I lived here for days and nights on faith and faith’s immediate reward. I wanted patience and asked for it, and before the words had died from my lips it came; and so with courage and peace. I don’t think that will be any strange experience to you; for if I am not mistaken, your religious life began with much such personal intercourse between God and your spirit. But with me, almost all religious questions have been first attacked on the intellectual side, and although I have had many proofs that God has heard my prayer before, this kind of realisation of His presence and help has come with great force and has been a great confirmation of my faith. And so as I gave you a reserved reply to your question a few weeks ago, I give you an absolute one now, and if it shall help you in the slightest degree I shall be more than reconciled to my suffering—I am that now; I shall count the ability to help you a precious added gift.

“I know what you may be thinking while you read this—it is easy even in physical pain to preserve composure and faith, but debility, nervous depression and lassitude bring in quite new conditions. ‘*The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?*’ Yes, I know it, and with all sufferers whose anguish is that they cannot quell fears and doubts they

quite suspect to be morbid and overstrained, and cannot count on the heart they fain would offer to the True and Good One, I have great sympathy. But still it is true that we ought to be master of our moods, if not to-day yet in time; and truth will recover those whose very sorrow is that they have let go the truth. That is to say, we must make allowance for physical condition in spiritual life, but also remember that the spiritual life has its own conditions; that these are primary, the other secondary. I know you remember this, and therefore you are struggling, hoping on; and I bid you God-speed in the confident expectation that you will again come into the light of God's countenance.

"Have you made any progress in the solution of that problem, the part the will plays in our faith ?

"Of course, it would be wholly wrong to put an act of will in the place of a reason for faith, or refuse to use our judgment in our faith. But when our reason is bemuddled rather than contradicted, when all sorts of wild possibilities usurp the fancy and the great incomprehensibility haunts us, we can use our will to check this confusion, and say 'Peace, be still.' And where on the one side we have what was our calm deliberate judgment, the promptings of all that is best and truest in affection and conscience, everything in short that is venerable and worthy of honour, and on the other side we know not what of perplexity and foreboding, the sense of mystery, the distrust of ourselves—here again we can say 'I will not be the slave of these things; I will let my old judgment, my love and hope, and my past experience speak.'

"Now, if when you are swaying and balancing between faith and unbelief, you were to throw yourself into the scale of faith, don't you see that that would be decision ?

And that is perhaps ultimately the test, the moral judgment passed between the believer and the unbeliever ; ' Into which scale did you throw yourself ? '

" And here comes in another word which at first might seem to have little to do with belief and credibility and matters of evidence—the word ' ought.' We ought to believe what is morally, spiritually worthy ; we ought to believe that ' what should be is.' Of course, if all the weight of reason were on the other side ; if proof were multiplied that there was no God, no intelligence, no moral order, no beneficent meaning in the world, then these considerations would have no value. But confessedly it is the reverse ; uncertainty is all that the boldest sceptic would affirm ; it is the difficulty of realising, of following out into its applications our faith, which is the common difficulty of believing ; and therefore, we are entitled to say to ourselves, ' Up, no more of this : it is a question of moral force, of spiritual holiness. Where ought the preponderance to be ? '

" I am writing under great physical constraint, lying on my back, and in an uneasy posture, and the constraint of my position affects my pen and my brain, but I hope you see my meaning. Our faith is really the most distinctively personal thing about us ; all our hopes, purposes, perceptions come out in our faith. When Christ says, ' Believe on me,' He is in fact saying, ' Give yourself up to me.' And that being so, we are on the wrong track if we think we must be certified concerning God before we believe on Him. Throw yourself in on the side where everything dear to you is, everything you regard as precious and holy, and you would soon find your intellect justifying your faith and giving rational clothing to it. I do earnestly hope you may find some ' bread ' in this letter, and not ' stone ' instead."

BIRTH TO GOD INCLUDES THE INTELLECT.

"22nd October, 1880.

"Before I answer your letter received the day before yesterday let me take advantage of one phrase in your September letter which it did me good to get at Brassington.

"You speak of your former faith as being 'built on the sand.' Do you remember that Luke tells us that Christ spoke of 'digging deep' and getting to the rock, that is going through the sand. The sand may lie above the rock: your personal experience was built on thought and feeling all of which implied and rested on the rock Christ, below. And by and by you may have reason to thank God that the sand was swept away that so you might get to the solid truth below. Our own faith is a poor foundation, but if it rests on Him, we are not to despise it. All that past of yours which seems so worthless is only so as foundation; as superstructure, it may have been good.

"Now for a word or two about myself. I have had another fortnight in bed, part of the time anxious lest an accumulation of matter should prove to be connected with inflammation in the bone. Happily it was not so, and the healing work is going on. Oh! what a joy it is to me to know that healing is God's work; that He is in the healing power, nay, Himself the power that heals. Today I am better than I have been at all: I am allowed to get up and move about as I can with my leg on a chair before me.

"I am pleased to think I shall see you at Christmas. I want to catch your thoughts just as you utter them; I think I might turn them, guide them, shew you that your own thoughts are guiding you to faith in God.

"We are made up of many parts; conscience, intellect,

affection, will. You were born to God, may I say it? in feeling and conscience; but you made the discovery that your intellect too wanted to own the over-mastering control. That I fairly believe is the secret of your trouble; and when it pleases Him to reveal Himself to your highest reason you will be at peace. You will not of course, 'make your judgment blind; ' but don't lay down the sort of intellectual satisfaction you intend to demand, and say nothing else will do. '*Except I shall see His hands, etc., I will not believe.*' Rather wait, and He will teach you in His own way.

"It has not seemed to me—I may be quite wrong—that you have been aware of strong reasons against believing; have you not been suffering from an overpowered imagination presenting you with all sorts of vague and horrible possibilities; and also from the perception of mysteries and difficulties in the way of faith? These may be grounds for distrusting your own faith; they are not necessarily reasons for unbelief. If I had thought yours was primarily a trouble of the reasoning faculty I should have asked you what your reasons were and whither they led, and to what conclusions more rational than the Christian faith they led you. But if it be, as I think, that you are overpowered with a rush of fancies, fancies summoning feelings, it is in your power to summon these to give an account of themselves; and if they cannot justify themselves at the bar of reason to make them stand aside while you discuss the questions they suggest in the light of reason alone. I think your reason purely is Christian. You believe it more rational, don't you, that all the pure and tender thoughts of which your religion is the source have been inspired and revealed by God, than that they are the creation of human ingenuity, the offspring of the human fancy?

“ Human ingenuity makes guns, and trades unions, and masters’ associations and such things; and human fancy fills our days with darkness and our nights with horrors. Which is more rational? The belief that Christ is the Son and Revelation of the Father, or the creature of human speculation, the outgrowth of human history? Men have marred the image, how can they have called it into being?

“ Meanwhile, keep your love of God. If your husband should fall into a fever and have the delusion that he had no wife, had only dreamed that he was married, you would be touched at every word revealing his love for the woman he once thought his. You would say he loves me still, and he will awake to find me near him, to find that I have never been unfaithful to him. I need not explain my parable—read the last paragraph in my sermon on the ‘Confession of Thomas,’ it is as true of the Father as of the Son.*

“ And then as to what you say of the Atonement—the great reconciliation was that of us to God; and the revelation was the Atonement. Hold to that. By and by you will go on to find that sin was the cause of a conflict in the Divine nature too, and the reality of that conflict will only enhance your estimation of the saving, reconciling love of God. . . .”

Mrs. A. writes on January 30th, 1881, that she has followed his advice and read Maurice’s “Notes on the Gospel of John” and finds him helpful and refreshing. She feels as a “hopeless, bitter, sceptical old Greek might have felt if he had been walking on the banks of the Jordan, and had come unexpectedly upon John the Baptist preaching.” Maurice so leads one up to Christ that it is impossible not to feel the thrill of a fulfilled expectation and to believe in Christ as the Light of the world. A friend is staying

* Pp. 129, 130, “Christ’s Healing Touch.”

with her who has been reading Abbott's "Philo-Christus" and finds it easier to believe in Christ without the miracles than to accept the miraculous element in the gospels. But this does not satisfy Mrs. A. If miracles are to go, what about the Resurrection? Still she is hampered by a "daymare" which returns to chill her best moments. Suppose the account of the life and words of Christ to be true and that He was all they represent Him, and yet that He was mistaken—that He kept His faith and hope up to the end, and then passed into the dark unconsciousness of an absolute death? The Resurrection would settle that doubt if it were historically proven—but is it? She supposes it is not. It might be possible to dispel these doubts by an effort of the will, but it would be more satisfactory to answer them.

Mackennal replies as follows:—

A THEORY OF RELIGIOUS DOUBT.

"10th February, 1881.

"... I am so pleased with your letter; delighted first of all that you enjoy Maurice. Anyone who enjoys Maurice is a saved soul. When you have finished the 'Gospel of John,' if you care to read 'The Old Testament' and 'The Prophets and Kings' and hesitate about buying them, let me lend them to you. You will gradually get to see Maurice's position in regard to Revelation and the Gospel, and the Advent and its meaning, and then his position will be yours. That is, he will explain your position to you; one of the beauties of his position is that he makes us understand even the meaning of doubt.

"Shall I give you a hint or two on that point? God's first object in calling us into being is to reveal Himself to us, and to reveal Himself to us is the purpose of Providence and the end of the Incarnation. But God speaks to us by every part of our being. Don't, I entreat you, think that Revelation is addressed to the intellect alone, as if we had to know intellectually truth and duty, and then make affection, conscience and will obey. No,

affection can hear Him and conscience can hear, and even our practical choice may respond to Him. Just as all the senses give the world access to our minds, although the eye is supremely the observing organ, so the intellect is only one of several channels by which God addresses Himself to us. It is the province of the intellect to co-ordinate and arrange the impressions made on us through any channel, and if it ultimately fails to find its fitting place in the whole scheme of thought for any idea, that idea will have to go. But just see what is our course in life. We do not grow altogether; sometimes one, sometimes another part of our being is in advance. And hence comes doubt. Our hearts long to be assured of the truth of what God is speaking to our hearts, but the intellect for a time is puzzled.

“‘I don’t see where these ideas can be fitted in,’ or

“‘I’m not yet satisfied with the evidence.’

“Conscience, too, says: ‘This ought to be true.’

“But Intellect replies: ‘I’ve nothing to do with ought, I want to see the fact.’

“It may be, on the other hand, that intellect is sluggish, and passes ideas which have not shown their vouchers. They may be true, or they may be false; but when the intellect wakes up, then comes a commotion. Every thought is rooted out, challenged, made to produce its warrant for being there; we feel as if the dearest friends we have were being turned out. It’s only the critical judgment doing his duty, doing it with fuss and hurry because he has been napping. By and by when he finds that the ideas he has been challenging have a right where they are, he’ll be very submissive, and will do his best to help them to fulfil their mandate.

“I have come nearer to formulating a theory of our religious thinking than ever I have come before; and I

hope you will see the sense of it. I am sure it will comfort you to think that Divine revelations come, not all through the critical judgment, nor all through the intellect primarily, although the critical judgment finally determines their validity, but that He speaks to us through all the channels of our being. A true, devout, trusting spirit is all ears, open to direct communications with God on every side.

“ To come back to your letter, I was glad to find that you are not satisfied to accept the gospel wanting the miracles. I have nothing to say against those who are satisfied to do so ; but I always feel how differently they are constituted from me. If I did not believe in one great miracle, the Resurrection, which is able to carry all the others with it, the Cross would seem to me the darkest, dreariest fact in history ; and it would take me years to be reconciled to life, if I ever could be so.

“ But I am a little surprised at one of your questions : ‘ The Resurrection is not, is it, historically proven ? ’

“ If anything can be called historically proven in ancient history, I should say this is. There is documentary evidence of the existence of the belief in this, going up to within about a generation and a half of the death of Christ ; the writings of the earliest of the Fathers concur with the four gospels which appear to be, and some of which profess to be, compiled from eye-witnesses of the events ; the existence of the early Church also, in its faith, in the spirit and temper which animates it, is also accounted for in the gospel narrative, but is accounted for no way else. Is it not a very striking fact that sceptical lawyers are rarely found ? and that the great opposition to the facts and to the historical accuracy of the gospel in our times comes, not from men skilled in estimating the evidence which establishes the facts of human life, but from

scientific men whose investigations concern facts of a wholly different kind?

“Of course, there are reasons for doubting whether any historical evidence can establish particular facts. There are matters in which we do not trust one or two of our own senses, we demand more accuracy than is possible to the unaided use of these. And when the historical evidence is all before us, there remains the question—what is the interpretation we are to put on all this? Our answer to such a question will depend on our religious philosophy—called by this or by no such ambitious title—if we can reconcile the facts, simply received, with our general scheme of thought, then the thing is settled; if not, then we are bewildered; if the moral difficulty of believing in the unbounded gullibility of men and the fatal intrusion of charlatanism in the noblest characters does not appear to us, we shall find it easy to formulate an infidel theory of the origin of the gospels. But this weighing of the question after we have heard the historical evidence ought not to preclude us from saying, ‘the amount and kind of evidence for the Resurrection would have ensured its prompt, unhesitating, and universal admission, if it had been a fact of the ordinary kind.’

“Of course, this does not close the enquiry—there are some men to whom the idea of a miracle is inadmissible, and no historical evidence could establish a miracle to their satisfaction. But if you are not of their number, don’t let the great outcry of the present time confuse you as to the real evidence, historically speaking, for the gospel history. If you are interested in this matter, I can lend you Isaac Taylor’s ‘Restoration of Belief,’ or you can look over the summary of contents in Westcott’s ‘History of the Canon of the New Testament.’

“This is a long letter. I hope it will not weary you.

If my little account of the genesis of doubt strikes you as rational, you will be able to fill it up, and you will be a little reconciled to yourself by thoughts it will suggest to you.

“I shall be glad to hear from you again as soon as you are disposed to write.”

On October 15th, 1882, Mrs. A. asks: “Will you tell me whether you believe at all in any imputed righteousness?” There are so many ways of explaining away the Atonement nowadays that she can only take refuge from the confusion in the text, “*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.*” Does this contain everything?

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND IMPARTED LIFE.

“28th October, 1882.

“The book reached me safely and your note with it, to which I will reply—I was going to say with pleasure—but was checked by remembering what you tell me in it of your health. How wonderfully different is the effect on us of different troubles.

“I was calling yesterday on one of my congregation, who is, I have no doubt, in consumption, and there she was bright and hopeful. Before her lungs were affected as they are now, she laboured under a depression of spirit much worse in its character than yours. A good outward trouble, too, like a broken leg or a carbuncle, is perfectly consistent with good spirits. You know what is wrong with you, and that is much; it’s the mystery of sickness that makes it so dreadful. That, partly, and partly some infirmities seem to sap the sources of resolution. But ‘He knoweth our frame,’ and He who knows us will judge us. The religious value of endurance, as of work, is not always as it appears to the outward eye. . . .

“I am glad that you are interested in theological matters. If you can only project them far enough from

you, they will employ your mind, and then the truth you lay hold of will support your heart.

“About imputed righteousness, I heartily believe in what Paul says of it, that our faith is reckoned unto us as righteousness. You reckon an acorn as an oak, and in prosecuting a year’s husbandry the farmer puts down an ‘imputed’ value to his seed-corn far in excess of its value as seed. Nor is this a new form of legalism, or acceptance by God on the ground of what we are, which you and I both reject with heart and soul and strength as no gospel for humanity. When faith is reckoned to us for righteousness, it is because of the promises made to faith as well as the promise of faith. God knows what and how much He can do with a soul that trusts in Him; how much He can give, too, to such a one. All His fatherly purpose He can fulfil in them that believe, and therefore He reckons faith as righteousness.

“That is not the imputing Christ’s righteousness to us. Though I hold this to be an impossible figment, we ought not to forget that Christ’s life may be, not by imputation, but in reality, ours. There is tremendous reality in the conception, so dear to George Eliot and others like her, of the great corporate whole of humanity in which we live and move and have our being, for which it were infinitely well to suffer, and of whose forces we partake. And of that body Christ is the head. All that He is, He is to us and for us. The head suffers when the body is sick, and the head directs the body how to get well. And our Head, though He has suffered, has never been weakened by our maladies. There is no truth more dear to me than that of Christ’s vicarious suffering and His bestowment of His life on us, which are parts of one great truth.

“‘God was in Christ,’ so you quote to me, and God is still in Christ, working out practically the reconciliation

which 'imputedly' was accomplished, and lawfully was accomplished when He died. I hope you will find the somewhat hard and doctrinal tone of these few words helpful to you—you know how true a sympathy with you there is behind them. I shall be glad to reply to you again whenever you are well enough to write."

On January 13th, 1885, Mrs. A. writes to ask what he thinks of Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." She understands that he does not approve. If so, why do such satisfactory premises lead to unsatisfactory conclusions? She has herself felt that "law" is too hard and impersonal a word to cover such transactions with the soul as forgiveness, mercy, or redemption. These are clearly personal. Also she feels that Drummond commits himself to a doctrine of conditional immortality. He implies that only some persons have souls, and of these only a few succeed in saving them. Since reading Drummond she has been reading the "Unseen Universe" and likes it, and has also been interested in "Flatland, by a Square."

Ten days later Mackennal replies :—

DRUMMOND'S "NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD."

"23rd Jan., 1885.

"... I shall find it hard to put into a few words my objections to Drummond's book, more especially as I lent my copy and have not one to refer to.

"I recognise the great power of the book, and the beauty of it in many places. The enthusiasm and scientific fervour are also delightful. But from a religious standpoint I find it unsatisfactory; it is narrow, chilling, and self-sufficient.

"Your own criticisms on it have anticipated much that I should say—it is the old story, the world exists for the elect and not the elect for the world. If anyone should say, 'but it is of no use quarrelling with the facts, and that is what nature says;' my reply would be, the very object of the gospel is to deliver us from the tyranny of our partial and positive interpretations of nature. The defect

of the whole school to which Drummond belongs is that they think to reconcile us to their gloomy views of Christianity by telling us that there is the same gloom in nature. I am glad you read Maurice, for you will know how strenuously he contends that the gospel is light. Let it be that against the dogmatism of the naturalists, we have only to set hopes, aspirations, possibilities; the streaks in the eastern sky are but streaks; yet they are streaks of light, and after daybreak follows day.

“ Do you remember Drummond’s last chapter, in which he says that a life of moral purity only differs from an immoral life as the exquisite forms and workmanship of the polycistinas differ from the rude clay tests of humbler members of the order ? * This is the rock on which the Calvinistic systematisers have always split—the abolition of morals; moral distinctions only æsthetic differences, after all ! It seems to be the *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole book. Drummond puts it in a grosser form than many—the immoral person is true to his nature, the moral person to his.

“ I have dwelt on this point, because it seems to me to indicate that his theory is not only unsatisfactory, but dangerous. I have *seen* antinomianism in its workings and results, which I think you have not, and I know nothing worse in its effect on the conduct of some and the emotional life of others.

“ You ask me where Drummond has gone wrong when he is right in so much. I think I can see some points where he has wandered. He has declined definition of his terms. If he had defined life it would have been evident that in his chapter on ‘ Biogenesis ’ he was taking

* On reading the chapter on “ Classification ” carefully, I think Drummond did not mean what is imputed to him here. This is an inference from what he says, not an assertion of his.—D. M.

for granted the thing he should have proved. Even then, I think the analogy breaks down. The definition of a biological individual would go to indicate, either that a regenerated soul is not a biological individual, or that it is not a case of biogenesis. However, on this point I should not insist.

“Another point at which he has gone wrong is this. He plainly indicates that there is a science of psychology, and he believes in the human will. And yet he treats the innermost questions of human life from the biological standpoint simply. He does not ‘compare spiritual things with spiritual.’ Surely we would suppose that if anywhere biology should recognise its subordinate station in the hierarchy of the sciences, it would be here where the spiritual life is dealt with. . . .

“Do you remember the chapters on ‘Parasitism’ and ‘Semi-parasitism?’ In these he elevates his personal likings and dislikings into laws of nature.

“I read an earlier edition of ‘The Unseen Universe.’ I must get the later one, and also ‘Flatland.’ All these speculations are very interesting, but after all, the diversity between the ethereal and the spiritual worlds seems to me as complete as that between the material and the spiritual.

“We come back to the human consciousness—the consciousness of self—and there we have to rest. You know, I think, that I regard Tennyson’s ‘Flower in the crannied wall’ as rank heresy; to know man’s place in nature is not to know man, and not to know man is to be ignorant of God.

“I think in some directions Drummond’s book will do good. I found the other day that some friends of mine, whom I had never been able to persuade that natural order was in any degree venerable, or to be regarded as other than a trifling inconvenience to be scorned by our

piety and overcome by our prayers, had learned from it that nature was worthy of some reverential regard after all. I shut up, and said nothing more in criticism of the book, for I was very glad that that effect should have been produced.

* * * * *

“P.S.—I still have some paper left blank. I will give you a remark of a friend of mine on Drummond’s statement that the law of gravitation prevails in the spiritual world, and that if it is not operative, it is because there is nothing for it to act on. ‘That is,’ says my friend, ‘as if one should say the marriage law of England prevails in Scotland too. If it is not seen to be operative, that is because England stops short at the Tweed.’”

CHAPTER IX

A SPIRITUAL DIRECTORATE (*Continued*)

*“Where are the Christians in their panoply ;
The loins we girt about with truth, the breasts
Righteousness plated round, the shield of faith,
The helmet of salvation, and that sword
O’ the spirit, even the Word of God ?”*—BROWNING.

IN the remarkable correspondence between Mackennal and Mrs. A. no letters passed between the two correspondents more valuable than those written in 1887. It is the nature of the letters as well as the fact that Mackennal wrote them which gives them their place here. Those who knew him will recognise that from a man who weighed his words, as Mackennal did, the letters become an important reinforcement of the truth he preached—they are a seal set to the gospel. Even those who read with critical eyes will hardly fail to see in them a human document of the first value.

Shortly before the first letter, Mackennal had seen Mrs. A. She writes on January 7th, asking him to repeat what he said. “Your words sounded like a dim prospect of release from the weary recurrence of falls and failures, like an answer to the problem how it is that if we be really partakers in the divine life of Christ—really branches of the Vine—our progress is so imperceptible, secret sins so unconquered, pride so unsubdued, self still so supreme over us. Is effort, as some say, a hindrance and a mistake?”

HOLINESS IN EXPERIENCE.

“11th January, 1887.

“I will answer your letter most willingly, but I feel as if it were impossible for me to teach you any new doctrine. The only thing I can do is to give you a little bit of my recent personal history. You will not have listened to many words before you will see that it is not egotism which leads me to do that; I shrink a little from the work of confession, but you have frankly asked me for fuller explanation of what I meant, and I will as frankly give it.

“Some time ago—eighteen months perhaps—a few words

dropped quite incidentally by a friend, in a conversation about Conformists and Nonconformists, made me reflect that 'holiness' was a word practically without meaning for me, both in life and in my teaching. Goodness, righteousness, such words had meaning, and all sorts of ethical questions came before me, in life and teaching; but I remembered how I had gradually let slip the idea of holiness in my devotion to these special and human, rather than divine, graces of character. I did what I have always found effectual in similar perplexities—I prayed for light on the subject of holiness, and gradually I found my thoughts growing clearer and becoming consistent. A number of things conspired to illustrate for me the very theme on which I wanted light; until at last I had very definite ideas, and to my great surprise I found that it was exactly as I had worked the thing out years ago on a very different line. Then came another step. I was not holy, and I recognised why not. I was not meaning to be. There were one or two pet little ways of my own I meant to keep; a pet prejudice or two I meant not to lay aside, and I could see that just here was the reason of my dropping holiness out of my scheme of life and teaching. The folly of this, the absolute inconsistency of it, appeared to me; and I changed my prayer for light on holiness into a prayer for holiness, dropping my hesitations and aversions and reserves entirely. The answer to my prayer came at once; I was like the woman in the gospel, I felt in myself that I was whole of that plague.

"You will see it was a new experience I gained rather than new thought. But I will try to illustrate one of the new thoughts supplied me. You remember there is an ascription in a Psalm '*the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe.*' Now the truth which I experienced—not my experience, but the

truth it presented to me—is like that. In wayward, sinful, petulant, worldly, base moods, it is possible for me to remind myself that these are of the flesh, and that I am—pardon my bold, blunt way of putting it, it may help you if you see that I do not shrink here—of the spirit.

“The holy life is just the divine life flowing through us, living in us and we in it; and this is not a figure of speech, but a reality.

“About effort, my inward life is more of effort than ever it was; only it is not the effort of an overburdened beast of burden, but the effort of the climber to use his limbs, which he can use if he tries, and while he is using them he is drinking in strength as well as developing strength.

“Many things had been helping me to grasp, as I had never grasped before, the truth of the new life, the life of Christ in His people, the regenerate life, the life of the spirit. The doctrine of evolution had helped me, with its revelation of the one life in all the universe—both intelligence and power—which underlies even our personality and all human existence. Herbert Spencer’s unknowable force, which is eternal and the reason of all things, if only you will name it God, is a help to the conception. My friends, many of them, were helping me—you among them, speaking once of the ‘entire consecration’ and the ‘perfect power’ which I was commanding in my sermon—I being all the while unconscious of what I was doing, and what truth I was uttering for the spiritually quick to see. But the real revelation came when I asked to be holy, and let everything go that I might take that.

“Now, have I answered your letter? I do not suppose there is anything here with which you are not perfectly familiar; but it is just possible that some help may come to you in old familiar sayings uttered by a new voice. I will not write more, for I cannot now drop the personal

style for the impersonal ; and there is no need of expanding what I have said.

“ I do pray, and will pray for you that you may have such an experience as will suffice you, of the quickening of your mortal body by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.

“ I shall be pleased to hear from you again ; but don’t write unless and until you are moved to do so. Then, don’t delay.”

AN APPEAL TO PAUL.

“ 22nd January, 1887.

“ I am going to direct you to our master in this line of thought and experience, the Apostle Paul. I think you will find what you want in the end of Roman vii., and the beginning of Rom. viii. Remember please, that this separation of chapters is wholly misleading. Begin at vii. 24, where he craves deliverance from the body of this death. Then come his thanks for deliverance: next the deliverance is described, and that deliverance begins with the consciousness of distraction —the two men ; he can separate himself from the sinful, craving, deceitful flesh, and because he can do that, because he can throw himself into the other scale on to God’s side, he is joyful. Because he is in Christ, not after the flesh, but after the spirit—all his gladness springs from this.

“ But still the body is there—viii. 10. If Christ be in you the body is dead,—it is true (*O wretched man, etc.*) the body is dead, it is true, because of sin, but the spirit is life, because of righteousness. Here is the reassertion, in presence of the experience of evil in the flesh, of the reality of the spiritual life, which is in its own nature, holy.

“ And not only so, but even that mortal body—the feeble thing of nerves and moods, slow to think and quick to feel (and act on feeling) may be quickened ; even the body may be made the organ of the spiritual life. How

fully? Well, we have seen saints, haven't we, whose sainthood seemed to reside in every fibre of the body as well as in the inner spirit? Only, let us not forget the touching aspiration of Phil. iii. 21. He who writes so confidently about the mortal body being made alive confesses (Phil. iii. 11.), that *his* mortal body was not yet fully quickened, and at the end of the chapter, sighs that it may soon be so.

"Now, I am sure you can translate all this into your own experience and hope. It is humiliating, it is—we ought to acknowledge it—sinful to surrender ourselves to the ways of the old man, the selfish man, the—whatever we call him, who is not of the new and consecrated life. But we know what pardon is and succour, and we know how to betake ourselves to His side with whom we live in the heavenly places. It's a real life, be sure, which is in believers, and that will be seen, indeed, is felt now by them. How fully the body is to be quickened depends on many things—partly on what sort of a body it is, partly on the character of the renewed personality, partly on our resolve and purpose.

"I don't think I need write more, for you can see what I want to say in what I have said, and far more. But I will write more if you wish it. It has been a real pleasure to me to write this; so full of hope and sympathy with you am I.

"Do you know my 'Life of Christian Consecration'? I think there are things in it which may help you."

Mrs. A replies that she was startled by his prescription, as she has always had a dislike to the casuistries and subtleties of the Apostle Paul, and particularly to the vii. chapter of Romans. Nevertheless, she read it again and again, praying all the time, and then other chapters and epistles, with increasing eagerness as the light came more clearly through. Now she sees that there is all the difference between the old life and the new. She has a definite hope that she may know

this in her own experience, but her sceptical spirit mocks her with the doubt that it is only a passing emotion. Meanwhile, the New Testament is all ablaze with just this truth—this imparting of the Divine Life, this indwelling Spirit. The verses startle her—such as “we have this treasure in earthen vessels,” and many others. She has been reading Bushnell and finds him a perpetual confirmation. She quotes the passage (chap. x. of his *Life and Letters*) where he awoke one morning saying he had “seen the Gospel,” and another where he speaks of the Christian faith as being not assent to any proposition, but the “trusting of one’s being to a Being, there to be rested, kept, guided, moulded, governed and possessed for ever.”

Mackennal writes in reply :—

THE SEAL OF THE GOSPEL.

“16th February, 1887.

“. . . My impulse on getting your letter, was to write you at once, and tell you how profound a joy and thankfulness the reading of it gave me. There was not only *you* to thank God for, but the truth which has saved us and will save so many more. Every one ‘who believeth hath set to his seal that God is true.’ I felt distinctly stronger in my own assurance because of your apprehension. So that, here comes another illustration of the reality of the divine life; the fellowship one with another following on our fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

“Thank you for the quotations from Bushnell. I shall read his life again, on the outlook for all this. His remarks on ‘resignation not being self-annihilation’ were specially timely to me. For I have lately had this thought in reference to the Holy Spirit as the medium of Christ’s dwelling in us. If Christ dwelt in us directly, would not His personality be lost in ours, or ours in His? This is, however, philosophising, and although philosophy has with me shared in the awakening, and the doctrine of Evolution appears full of spiritual significance, yet philosophy is not necessary to spiritual life. . . .

"Thanks too, for your text Eph. i. 18. I will keep it before me. I have been reading the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, the earliest Christian writings we have. Paul himself experienced an enlightenment of the eyes of his heart between Thessalonians and Ephesians. The absolute faith in Christ is the same in both Epistles, but what a difference in scope and insight. I like Thessalonians too, for this if for nothing else. It forbids the thought of forming a little church, or select spiritual circle, on the ground of a common sharing in any special apprehension, however lofty, of Christian truth. The idea of fleeing from the wrath to come, and the certainty that Christ is the deliverer seems very rudimentary when compared with 'Christ in you, the hope of glory,' 'Christ the head of the new creation,' etc. But Christ does not contrast the grades of knowledge in Christians; He responds to the trust in them all. And the spirit of Christ in us does likewise.

"Now I must stop. I very heartily rejoice with you, and pray for you, and thank God with you, because of the 'new song' you are singing. Do you remember a rather searching examination you once subjected me to as to my 'knowing' that my prayers were answered, and my 'knowing' that my trust was well founded? I think you will recall the circumstance, for I reminded you of it after my accident at Brassington. Well, those questions of yours were among the earliest movings of me, the result of which has been the turning of much faith in me into knowledge. And now the answer has come back to yourself. I suppose your questioning of me indicated a searching of your own heart, and you have blessed me in your way from twilight to day."

"And so the whole round world is every way
Bound with gold chains about the feet of God."

The following letter followed an interview at Bowdon :—

THE LARGER HOPE.

“ . . . When I spoke to you of my new apprehension of the divine life, I was somewhat troubled that you seemed so little interested ; I asked myself for a moment—only for a moment—is this new revelation to me only a fanciful setting forth of the religious consciousness in one of its aspects ? And when your letter came asking for more information, and afterwards, when you wrote saying how clear and full it all was to you, I felt full of gratitude. You too had set to your seal that God is true. I tell you all this that you may understand that your letters are more than interesting, they are of essential service to me. . . .

“ The University preacher at Oxford, Dr. Welldon, of Harrow, on Tuesday week seems to have preached a remarkable sermon on the Holy Spirit, in which he said that a careful statement of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost adapted to modern speech would be of the utmost value as a reconciliation between science and religion. I was delighted to see the sentence, for my mind had been moving in the same direction. I am afraid the sermon is not published. . . . *

“ And now for a longer talk on the main subject of your last letter, your love for the sufferers and your yearning for the outcast. When I read it I wondered that you made no reference to my hope on the subject of restoration. It is along that line of sympathy, yearning, dissatisfaction, the utter inability to give the abandoned up that so many have come to ‘ the larger hope.’ Whether it will be so or not with you I cannot tell, nor am I writing as a propagandist. I never try to make a convert to this special opinion, for unless the whole heart and soul

* A letter from Dr. Welldon on this subject will be found on p. 368.

and mind compel the hope, to cherish it may perhaps weaken the moral sense, but I rejoice whenever I find that another soul has been guided to it. All the analogies are in favour of another belief, the perishing of those beings unfitted by the possession of spiritual life for spiritual environment; but here is a signal instance of the insufficiency of analogy. Personal life has its own demands, and there is no analogy to personal being anywhere along the line of development that lies behind us.

“That is philosophising—and you don’t care for philosophising. Let me say how well I understand your impulse to go and pray for some soul out in the dark, you don’t know whom or where. There are so many such souls, of that we are sure. If you were a visiting or a teaching woman, or one able to do the outside work you long for, you would find such impulses take form in effort and prayer for people you know. But you are shut in from all that; and He who has shut you in has not debarred you from praying. You are of the workers and the watchers. . . .

“Sometime return the notes of this sermon. I find it has been very helpful, and I may use it again.”

Mrs. A. in her next letter (June 5th, 1887) writes that although her physical suffering is as great as ever, already it is not as it used to be; she is not left alone, now she is sure of another Being—not a mere idea—on whom she rests. She asks, “Do you really mean that the life within us will soothe and purify and control the involuntary workings of the brain? Bushnell says something like it in his sermon on the ‘Lost Purity Restored’; but it implies a distinctly bodily healing. May one ask or hope for such a boon as that?”

Mackennal replies:—

THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY.

“9th June, 1887.

“The shape of my envelope will probably have already told you that there are notes of another sermon for you—to

bring you into a more vivid sense of fellowship with the church of which you are a member, and its pastor. . . .

“And now I might stop, because I think the one thing which would make you cease writing me would be the suspicion that you were imposing on me the obligation of answering you in full. But there is one point in your letter to which I must refer—the influence of the spiritual life on the involuntary operations of the brain. I have Bushnell’s ‘New Life,’ and remembered that sermon on ‘The Lost Purity Restored.’ I looked it up and re-read it much to my delight ; and I was exceedingly glad to find how clearly and confidently he has spoken on this point. To me it seems just the test of the reality of the *life* we receive. I think, if you will refer back to an old letter of mine—one of the two I wrote you at the beginning of our present correspondence—you will see a quotation from Rom. viii. about the body being dead because of sin, but the spirit being life because of righteousness, with the application that the spirit can and will quicken the mortal body. How well I remember the transformation wrought in me when I fully apprehended those words. The resurrection is being accomplished in our experience, and the redemption—bodily—of humanity. That is how saints are made—saintliness is the conformity of the whole life through the will to the life of God. And you know you have already experienced it in part. When the great peace came and filled your soul, that was an involuntary change. The self-surrender was yours, but the emotional change following on that was not yours ; it was a vital—*i.e.*, involuntary change. You are a very quick pupil, so I needn’t enlarge on this point.

“But now, a talk to you about yourself, lest this very truth, entralling as it is, should only show you its shadowy side. You remember that very Paul who writes so

confidently in Rom. viii., in 2 Cor. iv. and v., groans in his tabernacle and wishes to be clothed upon, and in Phil. iii. (last verses) looks for a Saviour to come and change the body of his humiliation, etc., by the power by which he is able to subdue all things to himself. So you see that while all things are possible to him that believeth, all things don't happen even in *his* experience. I suppose that, as our Lord tells us, some demons don't go out as readily as others, so some taints of blood and defects of nerve may remain as thorns in the flesh. And there may be moods of the involuntary life, some more, some less amenable—in different individuals—to the transforming energy. I can quite believe that the sleep and sleeping thoughts of some persons may be as holy as the loftiest spiritual activity. But—there are bodily disorders in which sleep turns the whole being into a pandemonium; the master—the will—has relaxed his sway, and all the powers are up in license. Side by side, with the idea of the quickening power of the spirit over the mortal body, there is a dreadful vision—the result of our own experience—of what tumultuous horrors we might be the subjects of if we ever lost self-control.

“All which means that you may expect, pray for, and experience a foretaste of your adoption—to wit, the redemption of the body, but you are not to think the game is up, if you find that, in many ways, the fulness of the blessing is withheld. After all, death has to be endured and it has something to bring us.

“With respect to the other matter, the final issue of the conflict, the mode of Christ's victory over sin, the mode of the victory of our faith, believe what you can. The hope of final restoration is a hope. I believe the Apostle Paul had it. But I fully recognise the enormous force of the naturalistic argument for cessation of being; and

it imposes no strain on the conscience or the sympathies such as the old conception of endless tortures. If God guides you to the larger hope you will find a new glory because of it; if He doesn't guide you, no one else can."

In a letter dated July 11th, Mrs. A. appeals for guidance in a problem which has arisen out of the difficulty of bringing her thought of God into tune with her new found devotion to Jesus Christ. She has lived much with Unitarians, and has been accustomed to think of God as the Father and of Christ as the Word, the Revelation, the message of God. Now her absorption in the worship of the Son raises in her mind the reproach that she is forgetting the Father. When she replies to herself "I do worship God in Christ—What but God has He been to me all this time?" she is brought up suddenly by a conclusion so exactly opposite to Unitarianism that she is hardly prepared for it. It does not seem consistent with the words of Jesus about His own subordination to the Father. This is to her not a speculative question but a practical one, and as such she puts it to one, through whom God has twice answered her need.

Mackennal sent two replies to this letter. The second, on a post-card, is here printed first, that it may lose none of its beautiful precision and effectiveness:—

"July 14th, 1887.

"A little child drank of a stream—'the brook in the way'—and 'lifted up her head.' Rambling on she came to the fountain from which the stream flowed. To which should she be most grateful? Stream, fountain, or the draught in her?"

THE FATHER AND THE SON IN WORSHIP.

"July 12th, 1887.

"Your letter gives me real concern, because it looks as if the old tormenting spirit foiled in one direction was going to trouble you in another. If I begin with a few words of a theological character, you will please understand it is not because I think you will find a purely intellectual solution to your difficulties, but because we ought to have a conscience about our thinking as well as

about our feeling. I will tell you frankly how the whole doctrine of Christ's relation to the Father appears to me, and then I will speak, as best I can, about the special form of the difficulty which besets you. You will not be utterly disappointed, will you, if you don't find all your perplexity dispelled by this letter? I can only give you a friend's hand from one stepping-stone to another; if you see a foaming torrent and fear it will carry you away, you know how courage, patience and hope will steady you, and where these are to be obtained.

" You don't need me to tell you that we cannot form a clear conception of the mode of the divine Being. But personality is the highest idea we have of life, and we say that personality must be in God. But there must be society too, for absolute solitude would be as intolerable a thought to us as impersonality. If God is love, then again there is suggested to us a society in God, for love without someone to love is absurd; and how could society come up in history unless it first existed in God? But when we come to conceive the divine society, to express the relations between persons in God, we find ourselves utterly baffled, we can only say that the relation between a parent and his child—one in nature although in relation of superiority and subordination, and the relation one of love—is the best way in which we can conceive of the Father and the Son; and perhaps our relationship is but a faint revelation of that.

" If you can bear the words—I only use them because I want to make clear my thought, and I can find no others—this is the way in which I conceive of the internal, the domestic relations of the divine; the relation of the Deity to us is one relation, and we Christians express that in worship. Let me put before you an illustration; it won't shock you, for I am not trying to analyse the

divine, but to give you a hand to a stepping-stone. Suppose a family were profoundly interested in our knowing them—the family character, the family purpose—there would be no jealousy between the members of that family, and there should be no fear on our part of exciting jealousy there, if the one in whom we discovered the family likeness, though a son acknowledging subordination to the father, should be the one to whom we turned with fondest reverence. If, indeed, we used our knowledge of that one to slight his revelations of another, why in that case we should be wronging him as well as his family. But all the honour we paid to the family traits in him would be viewed by the family as theirs.

“I have put this before you, not argumentatively, but as a bit of my own thinking, because I want you to see that I do not consciously shirk the questions which divide us from the Unitarians on the one hand and the Swedenborgians on the other. Christ is not the highest being in the divine; but what we see and love and adore in Him is the divine. Christ is God, but not *the God*, a distinction well understood in Greek, though not in English. When He prayed, or spoke of loving the Lord our God with all our heart, etc., it was not self-revelation or self-assertion, veiled and indirect, but the true revelation of the Father. The Son reveals the Father by being a Son, not by confusing us as to whether He is not the Father. Don’t be afraid of tritheism here; if we must put all this into definitions, it would be tritheism; but these thoughts are only stepping-stones.

“To me it is a blessed thought that there is—and was in my lowest state when I first saw the grace and truth of Christ—one sentiment common between the Father and me. *Christ is the Father’s well-beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased; what more can He be to you than*

that? You and the Father meet in love of Him. Will you tell God that, and bless Him for that? I think your tormenting devil will leave you, if He finds you turning your absolute adoration of the Son into a new way of coming to the Father.

“Now, I think I may have started you on a line of thought and feeling which you will profitably pursue for yourself. The purpose of Father, Son and Spirit to us is one purpose; the life of Father, Son and Spirit is one life in itself and in us—a bit of philosophising which you must not allow to turn you off the track—but the relations to us of Father, Son and Spirit are not altogether the same. If for a time the blessedness of one relation so fills our heart that we can think of nothing else, does not the whole Deity rejoice therein? The one purpose is thus fulfilling itself; the one love is thus outpouring itself; the one life is thus developing itself in us.

“You are not wrong in having these thoughts, we must love God with our intellect; but you will be seriously wrong if you allow these perplexities to beguile you of your joy in Christ Jesus. Tell the Father how you love Christ; confess it, if you will, as a wrong done to Him, a sin against the ineffable glory—I am much mistaken if you do not laugh to yourself with a godly triumph at the very thought, and the unreality of your fears will be so revealed.

“Please remember that you are in bodily weakness, if in spiritual strengthening, and no more let the nerves by which you think enslave you than the nerves by which you dream.

“I will write more on this subject if you wish it, but I think you will see what I would suggest; and may God make these words medicine to you as He has made some other words food.”

The following letter is in reply to a question whether Jesus Christ did not know that the Syrophenician mother's faith would triumph when He put it to the test:—

CHRIST: THE ETERNAL SONSHIP: THE GODHEAD.

“10th August, 1887.

“. . . Your question on the Syrophenician mother—did not Christ *know*?—will be a good starting point for some things I have been wanting to say to you about the person of Christ and the Trinitarian conception of God. I am really happy to find that I am never troubled by difficulties in the thought of Christ as man arising from my belief that He is the Son of God; nor by difficulties in my reverence and trust in Him as divine arising out of my belief in His real humanity.

“In the first place we are obliged to conceive of Christ as feeling and thinking, etc., just as we do. Really no more is involved in my words about His ‘suspecting what might underlie the Syrophenician mother's ascription,’ than in the words of the New Testament authors about His wondering, etc. We must take those narratives as they stand, and read them humanly; if we check the fair attempt to understand these stories from our own knowledge of human nature, by applying an unknown standard of divinity, we shall be no nearer God, and we shall have lost the man. Isn't it blessed to think of the divine man—no masquerading Deity, such as classical story tells us of—but the divine spirit appearing in the reality of the human soul's working?

“Next, there is a doctrine, called the doctrine of the Kenosis, or the self-emptying of Christ, founded on the words of Paul (Phil. ii. 6—8), describing His self-humiliation in sharing the human lot. Look also at Heb. ii. about His taking part in the flesh and blood of the children. In all this we must conceive the actual enmanning of Himself; there is no reserve of divine knowledge

or power or privilege in Him ready to come out and save Him from defeat. The divine spirit dwelt in Him making the human experience the manifestation of the Son of God ; the Son of God did all His works and achieved His ends as man might do. That *that* was possible exalts the mystery of our manhood, which is capable of lending itself to such a manifestation—nay, let us say, to such an experience.

“I should go further—travelling a little beyond the particular case of the Syrophenician mother—and say that even to the divine, as divine, there must be some uncertainty in the estimate and forecast of men’s individual actions. This is involved in the reality of our freedom. What God is certain of is that we shall never pass beyond His influence ; His grace is enough for us ; but what we shall do or be to-day or to-morrow—if we be free beings—is in itself uncertain, and therefore uncertain to God. I have no doubt your metaphysical ability will make this plain to you as a matter of thought ; dare you take the plunge and imagine events in the human sphere uncertain to God ? If so, you will be rewarded, for you will find the centre of the divine composure and self-confidence to consist in an august readiness to deal with men in all circumstances ; you will find you have exchanged your utterance of belief in a barren omniscience for a conception of His plan to win free beings to Himself by being always ready for them, and a composure founded on His character of grace, such as will rekindle your adoration and exalt your love.

“I am bold, not in thinking thus, but in speaking thus ; for to some persons, the shock would be deadly to be told that they must not think of God as absolutely omniscient. I am not, however, afraid for you. Remember, however, your Bushnell. Divine truth, the truth concerning the divine, is not to be got at by qualifying one truth by another, but by letting one truth add itself distinctly to another.

What I have said I believe to be true, but surely not all the truth concerning God and the Man Christ Jesus.

“And now for another point. With all my admiration of Bushnell’s book, I do not accept his Sabellianism. I believe in the three persons, the eternal Sonship ; Christ did not pray to Himself, nor cast Himself on His own bosom, nor rejoice in Himself ‘in that hour.’ Bushnell dislikes the idea of a ‘society’ in God ; the old phrase used in such discussions a hundred years ago ; and I don’t wonder at it, for a hard and logical use of that phrase would involve tritheism. A great service has been done us all by science in these later days, in that we have been compelled to see that life is behind personality, and that personality springs out of life. In the life of the divine I seem dimly to see a unity underlying the threefold personality. I dare not go further—that is further back—but this thought of the life which constitutes the personality and determines the consciousness (and determines the conduct and the thinking in us before we become conscious of it) is closely allied to that mode of conceiving of the divine life in us of which I have spoken so much lately.

“It is, I know well, a dangerous subject to speculate on ; for if the reality of personality be trifled with, if personality should once appear an illusion, or a passing phenomenon like the wave that rises out of and falls back into the sea, then good-bye to religion and morals ; we are lost in pantheism. But remember your Bushnell ; the reality of personality must be affirmed in its own time, its own speech ; not as a qualification of other truth.

“The necessity of our conceiving the plurality of divine persons is this ; the idea of society, like every other great fundamental life-idea, must exist in God. We cannot conceive of this as existing in an absolutely simple being. To say God is love is equivalent to ‘God is loving,’ and

if He be eternally loving, He must have eternally an object of love. Schöberlein goes further and say 'objects,' for the mutual love of two will be not the highest love until and unless it go out upon another, an object of common love.

"I will not apologise for philosophising; one cannot speak on such themes without. Only see below the vapid philosophic form the real effort of the soul to find all good in God; and also see how the revelation in Christ has compelled such a quest in the region of thought. . . .

"You must not apologise for making me write such a long letter, for it is a pleasure to me to write to you. I shall be here for a full fortnight yet. Let me know when you return home."

Writing on August 10th, 1887, Mrs. A. says, "I think it would be harder now to make me doubt the being, and love and power to usward, of God, than it was to make me believe." But her mind is still perplexed by the inconsistencies of Christian character. She returns to the question, "Can pride and selfishness share the abode of the indwelling Christ?" She does not know whether her adviser would say, "Yes, but their power is broken. They are doomed and diminishing. Sin shall not have *dominion* over you"; or whether he would say, "No, they cannot share it. The divine life is holy. If the impulses of the soul are wrong, irritable, selfish, the regenerating grace is yet absent."

THE MIND OF THE FLESH, AND THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT.

"19th August, 1887.

"... And now about your earnest practical question. It appears to me something like this. The divine spirit has to possess us, not only by our own choice, but also in our whole being, habit, impulse, etc. This is a work requiring time, and at any given moment there might seem to be a very partial possession of us by God, if any at all. It has taken time for us to become what we are, in all this impulsive, habitual, subconscious life of the flesh. Ages formed the generation out of which we came, and

then our own personality has been gradually built up. It seems to me as inevitable that the divine work of completely recovering this must be gradual, as it is that it must be accompanied by voluntary action on our part. In each case there is a moral necessity involved. The conversion is immediate, the new inspiration is also so, or may be, but the working out is gradual. May the spirit of Christ enter a proud spirit? Certainly not. But if the spirit loathes its pride; refuses again and again consent to it, Christ will enter. And the work of transformation has to be begun, and go on, and by-and-by will end victoriously.

"I am writing hurriedly. Be sure to tell me if I have failed to meet your difficulty. That separation of the self from the 'law in the members' which is so profitless out of Christ is full of meaning when we are in Him. He says 'the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.' And He is able to do exceeding abundantly."

PERSONALITY AND LIFE IN GOD AND MAN.

"30th September, 1887.

"Mr. ——'s letter is enclosed with this; and I think the best way of treating the subject you have put before me is to say what I think of his letter. The difference between you and him is like the old controversy about man's freedom. The theologian's view was one thing, the philosopher's another; they used the same word with two wholly different significations. So are you two using the word self. Mr. —— is quite right in all he says about the 'self.' But he is speaking of the 'self' as a creation of God; you are thinking of it as the centre and spring of our activities. There is a solemn consciousness of which we can only speak with trembling; the consciousness of a life in one deeper than his own life; moulding and fashioning even that self; at once surrounding and

enveloping the personal being, so as to give us the sense of being in God and God in us, and also quickening the personal life to higher and holier things; things impossible to self becoming possible; intense personal life and at the same time the overpowering of the self-consciousness by the consciousness of the deeper life. I should not dare to speak thus except to anyone who knew what I meant. I call this a consciousness of God—the Life. A few months since I should have vigorously avoided that word consciousness. Now I do not. There are, and have been, many saints, perfectly skilled in psychology and in the use of words, able to distinguish between 'consciousness' and 'interpretations of consciousness.' And now I know that they were right when they spoke of being free from self even when they were most themselves.

"Are you ready for a walk in cloud-land? Please note that life is prior to personality; although human life can only be realised through personality. The error of those who would abolish 'self' altogether is this—they forget that God has made us persons—selves—and is to be served by the self He has made. To annihilate self would be a crime like that of the machine-breakers in the early part of the century; it would be to destroy the very capability of rendering the service God claims from us. But there is another error. It is to forget that God 'works in us to will and work;' and that He works there most fully when we are most free from the possessions of self.

"I am more and more filled with the sense of that life which is under all things; the basis even of personal existence; which was and was in us before we became conscious of it, and which has been a more potent factor than our own wills in making us such as we are. It is

‘one life, one God, one element,’ and will be in us as God if we will have it so. In us the Spirit, which is God, while yet it is the spirit of our own lives; in us oversweeping all thought of self, while yet we are sure that the self is being quickened, enlarged, exalted, and this very sense of God and participation of the great life-ocean will be revealed in a better, completer self.

“And this very thought of the life which underlies the personality helps me in the questions you had been putting to me before. Can we go further than our own consciousness and personality, and say that in God, too, the life underlies the personality? So that there are three persons and one God? I am convinced that either personality has much larger potentialities than we have been thinking of, or else that personality is not the final fact. I am convinced of the continuity of all life; that it is the same human life—not nominally but really—which is in all men; the same spiritual life which is in all Christians; the same life in us and in Christ; may we say the same essential divine causative life which is in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

“I will bring your letter of the 7th when I come to see you, and you shall ask me the questions you have crossed. You shall also interrogate me to your heart’s content about Mr. ——’s letter and this one of mine. I need not say that I know how imperfectly I understand even what I have written, and I should be delighted to be compelled to answer questions about it, so that its bearings may be more fully revealed to me.

“I might have written you in another style about Mr. ——’s difficulties and your experience. We being ‘in time’ can only learn ‘in fragments;’ and the utmost we can hope to do is to realise truth after truth, and to be true to what we are realising. The hymn, ‘Oh, to be

nothing, nothing,' is perfectly true to our sentiment at times, even if to a logical mind it seems nonsense. 'To be' and 'nothing' are contradictions. 'A broken vessel' is, simply by being broken, unfit for anything to flow through it. And so on. Nevertheless, to the spirit which pours itself out in such a passionate yearning that Christ shall be all in all, and that self shall 'pass in music out of sight,' there is truth rather than logic. And yet again, we have to learn to seek out 'acceptable words' so as not to provoke exception to our statements by those whom we are seeking to help to an experience which can alone make our words intelligible. It is better habitually to underestimate our feelings than to awaken the critical temper and so present temptations to go off on a wrong tack. (Is not this paedagogic?)

"I say, I might have made this the burden of my letter, but I have chosen rather to dwell on that other topic, because there must be some truth which harmonises even our contradictions. Even that harmonising truth will have its contradictory aspects; but, at present, I think I see in that conception of life and personality something which may help you as it has helped me. . . ."

In October Mrs. A. writes to thank him for his Union address. Then she returns to the use of the word "consciousness" in his letter. He took for granted that she knew what he meant, but she does not yet know from her own experience. She believes in the indwelling life; knows its reality by its actual victories and results. She has the "conviction" of that truth—but consciousness! that is another matter. She can conceive the possibility in others, but could not honestly use the word of herself.

As to life and personality—personality still seems to her the final fact. She thinks of God first as the great inclusive primal personality, and afterwards as the divine causative life underlying created personalities. Dr. Mackennal's theory seems to her to run into Mr. Edward White's, for the created personality may be forfeited as a personality yet not cease to be, as part of the universal life. Yet

this is nonsense, for we cannot conceive human or divine life without the element of personality. Deprive a being of that and he is annihilated.

PERSONAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE DIVINE LIFE.

“November 8th, 1887.

“ To-day, having a cold, I have also time to write you a few lines. And first, I must thank you for sending me *The Christian*, and for your very kind intention of defending me by a letter. I think you are right to decide that it was not worth while. The errors are very absurd, but folks who write in these papers are never wrong ; and probably, had you written, there would have been a note appended stating that I ought to believe what they make me believe, even if I don’t. The editor of *Word and Work* has had two articles about me ; in one of which he declares that if I will only say I believe in the imputation of Christ’s righteousness he will acquit the *whole Congregational Union* of heresy ! Wouldn’t that be imputation of righteousness ? Now, it so happens that I could say what he wants with a clear conscience, for the history of that word ‘imputation’ clears it from all the grossness which Wesley saw in it. However, I declined to put the editor in a fix ; I put instead his paper into the basket. . . .

“ About the personality question, doesn’t the solution lie here ? That the very idea of God—our idea—involves the identity of life and personality, so that to speak of a life behind the personality, or a personality void of life, would be equally absurd. In such a case, the word life must be enriched ; life would not be a mere vital principle —about which, I confess, I know nothing—it would be, not ‘being’ abstractly, but the very being of God. I sympathise with all your repugnance to keep out of sight, for an instant, the ultimate personality ; it is our only

stay against Pantheism, and Pantheism is the end of a true moral nature in man. But there is a danger lest we look on life, God's own life, as determined by the will of God, instead of being the very essence of God.

"And now about the other matter—my view of the word consciousness in relation to the divine life in us. I am surprised to find myself using it. You will remember how you used to press me on this very point, in relation to prayer, for instance, and to my hope and confidence in God, and how systematically I used to avoid your questions. I remind you of that to show you how much I mean when I say consciousness. I know that people are justified when they talk of a consciousness of spiritual help. I have been as vividly conscious of a grace given me which was not of me as of any other fact in my mental or spiritual life ; and the fact that I always used to avoid the word makes my present use of it the more significant. You will excuse the boldness and the baldness of this statement ; it is not audacity or excitement or spiritual pride which makes me speak so ; indeed, I suspect that your recurrence to the subject was because you wanted to get a plain statement. May I dismiss the subject with just two more remarks. You must not suppose that the word 'consciousness' expresses my habitual state, but the light which has been shed on my whole spiritual life by the fact that I can use it at all has altered the whole train of my life. And next, I wouldn't have said a word of all this, but that I have hoped it may help you.

"I have a second copy of Bushnell's 'New Life,' a rather shabby one ; if you have no copy I will let you have this with pleasure. I have been reading this morning 'the true problem of Christian experience,' on forgetting the first love ; a most able and admirable sermon,

although not an exposition of the text. Have you ever seen Kingsley's introduction to Miss Winkworth's 'Tauler, his Life and Writings?' It is the finest piece of writing I know of Kingsley's; the spiritual elevation of the theme has even touched his style. And now for another book. Have you seen 'Light and Rest,' an anonymous book, published by Partridge, and now out of print? It is very striking, by a Mr. Boughton Brown, who married an old friend of ours."

THE BASIS OF FAITH, AND ITS CONFIRMATION.

"Nov. 11th, 1887.

"Will you think me irredeemably optimistic if I tell you that it is all right, and that you have learned just the lessons which such an experience as yours is calculated to teach? We ought not to 'base (our) faith on answers to prayer for temporal blessings'—'any' faith you say in your letter, and I should agree with you if the stress of the utterance is on the word 'base.' And you are right in trusting *Him*, and that you can do so even though these last petitions have not been granted is a great blessing.

"But, there is no logical inference against the belief that the former experience was a true one, and the peace was in answer to the prayer. The logical inference is that God was graciously pleased to give His child a comfort then which now He has been pleased to withhold. And His reasons? Well, we cannot give them; but we may get lessons out of His dealing with us even if we cannot say these are His reasons.

"Must He always do with us the same thing? Was He bound to give you the much longed for relief this time because He gave it you before? Was He bound to withhold it then lest at some future time you might ask and He see it needful to deny? Then comes another

question, do you need just the same thing now which you needed then? Yes and no—the pitiable, pleading flesh cried out just the same; but was there no spiritual growth; might not 'love' expect to see His 'child brave?' as Lynch so beautifully puts it? I have sometimes carried one of my children over a rough bit of road; and sometimes I have said, 'No! no! take my hand and walk. . . .'

"I have been before this wanting to suggest to you that you might build too much on your own faith and its rewards; that, just as in the early days of your piety there was too much of the subjective, so now the most precious things of your experience might be a weakness to you; but two reasons held me back. I shrink from the profanity of 'reckoning people up,' and I was afraid I might suggest to you that I doubted the reality of the answers to your prayers. The latter is by far the more important matter. Distinguish between the basis of our faith and confirmations of it. The basis of our faith is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God; all our experience is a confirmation of it. . . .

"I am writing hurriedly that I may write at once. You will not suppose that this letter is hard with the hardness of a strong man who scarcely knows what pain, with its consequent depression and exhaustion, is. It's hard as a staff is hard; I hope there is something here on which you can lean."

CHAPTER X

A CONGREGATIONAL LEADER

*"If, in the paths of the world
Stones might have wounded thy feet,
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing—to us thou wast still
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm."*

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

cont'd

IN 1884 Mackennal had been chosen to preach the annual sermon to the Union. His sermon, from the text "*I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir*" (Isaiah xiii. 12), was characteristic in its weight and grip of thought, and was delivered with more than usual force and impressiveness. Two years later, in 1886, he was nominated for the chairmanship along with Samuel Morley and Alexander Hannay. Samuel Morley was elected by the assembly, but was unable to serve. Hannay came next, but felt it equally impossible to combine the post of secretary and chairman, and to surrender the work of the secretaryship for that of the chair; so he also declined. The situation was then a delicate one, and the committee felt that to offer the chairmanship to Mackennal under such circumstances did something less than justice to his acknowledged position. In this difficulty Mackennal's strong sense of public duty, and his singular freedom from self-consideration, rescued the committee from embarrassment. The following letter, in reply to an enquiry of the committee

BOWDON DOWNS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH—INTERIOR.

(The Reliefs are copies of Luca della Robbia's "Singing Boys.")



through the Rev. Thomas Robinson, indicates his attitude :

“ 19th June, 1886.

“ I have headed this letter ‘ private and confidential ’ because I want with the utmost frankness to say what I think about the chairmanship, and I could not do so if I thought what I said might be used to help to put me into the chair.

“ I have always regarded Hannay as being *ex officio* unable to accept the office ; he is therefore entitled to refuse the post, whether offered him by the assembly or the committee.

“ I don’t think any other man ought to refuse it ; the chairmanship of the Union is too dignified a post to go a begging ; and every man who should show reluctance, on grounds of self-respect, to accept it, would be only increasing the difficulty of offering the honour to any one at all.

“ Holding this opinion very strongly, I also felt this. The men whose names were put before the Union were in a very delicate position after Morley’s refusal. If they are not at liberty to say—as they are not—the assembly rejected us ; neither was the committee entitled to say—the Union chose you. It remains still an uncertain thing what the Union would do should those names come before it. If the committee should attach an importance to the first vote which those men honestly do not feel should be attached to it, the position would be a very delicate one.

“ I therefore thought that if the committee should say—we recognise the delicacy of the position ; we will leave these men to be dealt with by the Union at some future time ; meanwhile let us choose some other person altogether—it would be an admirable solution of the difficulty. I fancied that if this were put before the committee it would at once, and even without discussion, have adopted that course ; and the person so chosen might have accepted office.

“ This, you see, is very different from feeling it *infra dig.* to take an honour from the hands of the committee. If the committee, *sua sponte*, should offer the chair to any one, it could be only an honour conferred, even in present circumstances. But the pleasure of taking the post would be much marred by any doubt as to whether the Union was not misinterpreted, and the committee misguided, in the matter. Let me also add that no man ought to feel dishonoured by being put third after Morley and Hannay.

“ I hope my meaning is clear. Regard for the truth of things might make a man as reluctant as self-respect would, to take an honour which was not clearly marked out as his.”

This was in June. The committee unanimously agreed to nominate Mackennal, and when the assembly met in the following autumn the choice was confirmed with equal unanimity.

Mackennal's May address from the chair was one of the finest products of his mind and pen. His subject was the "Witness of Congregationalism." Beginning with the distinctive ideas of the church which separate Congregationalism as a church polity from mere democracy and separatism in the church, he found two characteristic Biblical principles underlying the Congregational contention that the regulation of the house of God is the charge of the whole household, and that the interpretation of Christ's will is the privilege and responsibility of the company of believers; "the first principle is the trustworthiness of piety; the second is the social perfection of Christians." These principles his own mind and reading were peculiarly fitted to illustrate. His delineation of the rising of the spiritual bond out of the merely natural or topographical tie in the church, is excellent; and the contrast which he draws between the Congregational ideal and the secularised and politically-adulterated ideals of the establishment is quite final for any one who reads sympathetically. The concluding part of his address is so characteristic of his mind, and so manifestly supplies the interpretation of his own action in the Free Church movement that quotation is necessary:—

"We stretch out hands of cordial fellowship to some whole communities and to many in all the reformed fellowships. Several years ago, I was asked by a lady minister of the Friends, "Why are not you and the Baptists one?" I was obliged to answer that I did not know. I am in a complete ignorance on the point to-day as I was then. Anticipating the conference of next month, our words must be few and well chosen, lest we irritate the susceptibilities we should allay. But, with so near an approach to identity in Christian sentiment, and so

complete a confidence and affection, is it not time for our co-operation if not our Union? Let us respect each other's traditions—family and local, as well as denominational—and not over-drive the feeble of the flocks ; but let us show as manly an indifference to prejudice and vested interests as we are continually demanding from our political leaders.

“With the Presbyterians, too, we have much in common ; our family likeness is only illustrated by our characteristic differences. What a history is that of the Presbyterian and the Congregational—or as it used to be, the Presbyterian and Congregational—churches? Twin children of the Reformation, with the same type of doctrine and idea of social worship ; aiming at the same end, yet contesting each point which it was possible to contest ; with quarrels ever ending in attempts at reconciliation, and reconciliation always thwarted when it seemed assured ; developing variations in expression and habit, and learning more from our differences than we could have learned from identity ; we seem equally unable to forget our ancient alliance and to renew it.”

“Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth
And constancy lives in realms above ;
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.

* * *

Each spoke words of high disdain,
And insult to his heart's best brother :
They parted—ne'er to meet again !

* * *

They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
A dreary sea now flows between ;—
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.”

“The cessation of the Calvinist and Arminian controversy in the larger thought of our time, and the general acceptance of the fact that special seasons of spiritual quickening may be expected and should be specially employed for spiritual culture, has revealed to us how much there is in common between us and the Methodist

connexions. Their churches and ours have been complementary, rather than antagonistic, to each other. The questions which we have wrought out doctrinally they have solved in practice and experience. We have preached 'justification by faith,' they have found assurance. We have proclaimed the equal privilege and responsibility of all believers ; they discover something for everyone to do, and send out an army of local preachers. We teach that churches should be assemblies of the saints ; they have witnessed to the possibility and experience of present saintliness. We accept their declaration that they are 'the friends of all, the enemies of none,' and rejoice in their endeavour to spread 'scriptural holiness throughout the land.'

"In the most heated times of the separatist controversy our fathers made no attempt to unchurch all the adherents of the national Episcopal establishment. They had an eye for the faithful, even if these were a faithful few, who 'feared the Lord,' and 'spake often one to another,' and rejoiced at the latent church within the parish. We also do this, not despite, but because of, our Congregationalism. We rejoice in the piety, the self-devotedness, the sacrificial labours, and saintly temper of many, laity as well as clergy, women as well as men, in the Established Church ; and say, without attempting to number them, 'The Lord make His people an hundred times so many more as they be.'

"We Congregationalists are said to be 'excellent members of the church militant,' and we do not repel the commendation. But we are not indifferent to the blessing of the peacemakers. Quite as significant as our contests for truth and righteousness is our desire to come to an understanding with our brethren ; we should 'hail with profound satisfaction any movement which would lead to conference of all the Evangelical bodies on the momentous question—how they can best contend together to bring the masses of the English people into the obedience of the faith of Christ.'"

The address had a wide circulation, and has recently been partly reprinted as a chapter in a book entitled "Constructive Congregational Ideals."

The autumnal address was on the "Life of the Spirit," but the original design was hampered by the necessity of giving some reply to Mr. Spurgeon's indictment of the Free Churches as to the decay of dogma. Mackennal's reply was that we were maintaining our historic position

in rejecting dogma but retaining doctrine. "Dogma," like other Greek words ending " $\mu\alpha$," suggests a finished product; it is assumed that a dogma is something final. "Doctrine" (*doctrina*), like other Latin words in "*ina*," represents a process; our doctrines are our endeavours to give as clear and full and harmonious utterance as is possible to us of the truths which we are apprehending. This, he argued, is not only the historic position of Congregational churches, it is true to the essentials of the spiritual life. The endeavour of the Christian life is not taking certain logical statements to realise them in conduct and character; that is a perilous way, and may lead us into superstition rather than into truth. The endeavour of the Christian life is that our beliefs may become realised in consciousness and experience; conduct and character add precision to our thought as well as take direction from it. We grow in knowledge as we grow in grace; we are for ever building ourselves up in our most holy faith.

It was not till Mackennal got clear of this controversy, which occupied more than half the address, that he is able to make his own contribution to his chosen subject, and then the limitations of time and space forbade effective treatment. This was unfortunate, for the subject was one on which he was exceptionally well qualified to speak, and what he does say is so full of suggestion, that he could hardly have failed to make a permanent contribution to the exposition of a great subject, had he treated it systematically. He anticipates the line of thought which is now becoming familiar, but which was at that time habitually ignored by theologians, that spiritual faith is itself an organ of immediate knowledge, with constructive power, and that as the intuitions of faith are followed, personal experience of spiritual verities becomes the guarantee of its own validity. The effect of the open

vision of Christ on the believing soul in its sanctification is well brought out. In much that is said the influence of the correspondence given elsewhere in full may be traced. Readers of these letters will find there many of the ideas which in a generalised form appear in the address.

The following letter is from Professor Armitage:—

“12th October, 1887.

“I desire to thank you warmly for your address, and my thanks go out and up beyond you.

“I will say nothing of the literary and intellectual quality of the piece of work—calculated as it was to stimulate and charm—for it is not my business to do appraiser's work. Neither will I say what I felt about the moral honesty and simplicity of your words.

“I wish simply to express my gratitude for that spiritual and constructive purpose which animated the whole, and to congratulate you, if I may, on the happiness of your being thus set as a seer and a herald in our midst.

“I remember feeling a good many years ago that Dr. Fairbairn was mocking the desires of our hearts when he said that the obligation resting upon us was that of becoming constructive in our theology. I saw plainly that the whole method of criticism which was characteristic of theology was against him and against all our hopes. I have of late learnt, as you have learnt, and learnt, no doubt, much more fully, that spiritual faith is a constructive organ, and that despite all perils we must follow its guidance.

“Perhaps I was mistaken in thinking yesterday that our assembly had not to any great extent been led to occupy your position and share your convictions and hope. Perhaps I was fanciful in imagining a silent protest against the invitation to embark upon this airy path, and yet I scarcely think that I was. And if I was not, and if our churches are yet far from ready to believe that a larger attainment in spiritual things than we have hitherto reached is open to us, then you have but entered upon your prophetic career, and you may well ask the prayers of all your friends that the words of your prophecy may not fall to the ground.”

One of the events of this year Dr. Mackennal used to describe with evident pleasure. It fell to him, as chairman of the Union, to head a deputation appointed to present

a loyal address of congratulation to Queen Victoria on completing the fiftieth year of her reign. The deputation had to wait while other similar addresses were being presented by a number of ancient corporations. When its time came and its name was announced Her Majesty graciously rose from her seat, and remained standing during the reading of the address. It was a simple act, but it stood for much which was well understood by Nonconformists, and which helped to turn the formal obedience of subjects into personal loyalty to the sovereign. It was understood as an act of respect paid, not to the deputation, but to religion, and a tacit recognition by the Queen that, though the law gave a fictitious predominance to one religious communion, there were other representatives of the Christian religion in her kingdom who gave her an equal obedience and had equal claims on her respect.

A letter from Dr. Hannay dated December 24th, 1887, gives his verdict on Mackennal's year of office as chairman :—

“ . . . I congratulate you heartily on the close of your year of special solicitude and labour, and the distinction, I say not which it has brought to you, but rather which you have given to the chair, as an office in which a man will not be the less but the more honoured by his brethren for his frank outspokenness on questions about which they are divided among themselves. The spirit in which a man speaks and does his work among us, rather than the letter or form, is that which determines the attitude of his brethren towards him ; it is a commendable feature of our church life, which your year vividly illustrates. May we long be able to maintain it in the truth—the newspapers, and the scratching creatures who haunt their columns, notwithstanding.

“ May you enjoy the well-earned rest of the New Year, and the best of blessings rest on you and yours throughout it.

“ Many thanks for the ‘ Words from the Sick-room.’ I have greatly enjoyed, and, I hope, profited by them. . . . ”

CHAPTER XI

CONGREGATIONALISM IN THE STATES

*“Wisdom doth live with children round her knees :
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
Man holds with work-day man in the homely walk
Of the mind’s business ; these are the degrees
By which true sway doth mount ; this is the stalk
True power doth grow on ; and her rights are these.”*

SHAKESPEARE.

Two years later, in 1889, Mackennal paid his first official visit to the United States. He was chosen to represent the Congregational Union at the Triennial National Council of the American Congregational Churches. He sailed up the St. Lawrence, visited Montreal, and met the Congregational Union of Ontario at Toronto. Thence he travelled to Worcester, Massachusetts, where the Council was to meet. The impression left by his speeches and action on this visit was such as to make him a welcome visitor in the States as long as he lived. Indeed, relatively he occupied in America a more eminent position as an outstanding and representative English Congregationalist than in his later years he did at home, where a new generation of men began to fill the public eye. During his absence the Rev. W. B. Selbie, M.A., then of Mansfield College, Oxford, took charge of the church at Bowdon.

The following letter refers to his Canadian visit. It

was addressed to Mr. Muir, the treasurer of the Bowdon church :—

“CLIFTON HOUSE, NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO,
“26th September, 1889.

“You will have heard from Mr. Jesse Haworth, and perhaps from our children, of our arrival and progress on this side the Atlantic. We had a week of broken weather last week, and, as we were a little tired of continual motion, we were not sorry to rest a couple of days in Montreal, instead of pushing on at once to Niagara as we at first intended. We have been well repaid for our patience. The weather began to improve on Friday last, and in Toronto and here we have had perfect days.

“We came up to Woodstock last Thursday, September 19th, where a ministerial friend of mine, Mr. C., is living. He had announced me to preach on the next evening, and I had a very good congregation. The newspapers take a great deal more notice of English visitors than of English politics, and our arrival in Woodstock was published among the personal news. On Saturday we came down to Toronto, where I preached on Sunday, in the morning, to a very large congregation in Bond Street Church, where Dr. Wild is minister—a colonial Dr. Parker; and in the evening to a large congregation in Zion Church, where Mr. S., a young man recently from England, is minister. On the Monday afternoon there was a conference of about forty pastors and delegates from churches in and about Toronto, and in the evening a public meeting. The people were very much interested in an English visitor, especially as my visit followed on that last year of Mr. Fielden, who greatly impressed his colonial audiences. Mr. F., the Secretary of the district Congregational Union, is for making an Englishman's visit an annual ceremony. I think it would be a very good custom, at least until we know more of Canada than we do.

“I think our people in Ontario are tolerably sound Liberals in the English sense, but they are face to face with a Roman Catholic question of which we at home know nothing. The two political parties outbid each other for the Catholic vote, and the nationalism of Canada is likely to suffer. There is no Orange feeling among those whom I met, but a great resentment of concessions to Rome of points involving the Papal direction of Canadian affairs. I shall have an opportunity of speaking about this when I return.

“On Tuesday we came up to Niagara, and we have had two perfect days here. It is one of the wonders of these falls that whatever view

you are actually getting of them seems the most impressive ; another way of saying that the memory cannot retain and the imagination cannot reproduce the actual effect of them. We have lived at Niagara two days.

"To-morrow morning we start for Toronto once more to take the boat down the St. Lawrence to Montreal, where I am to preach on Sunday. Mr. Jesse Haworth must not distress himself with the fear of my breaking down. Already I feel much refreshed by the change. The ten days at sea were days of complete brain rest ; my two days of sea-sickness were spent mostly in sleep, and the three days between shores were days of luxurious repose. The season is delightful—clear skies, a warm sun and a keen, fresh air. You can assure all my enquiring friends that we are both well ; and that I may discharge my duty to my own people the better on my return, I have left all care on the home side of the Atlantic. We intend to start on Wednesday next from Montreal to Boston by the White Mountains. . . ."

The following account of his visit to the National Council at Worcester contains an interesting comparison between Congregationalism in America and England. It shows, also, how closely the developments which have taken place in England during the last twenty years have followed the lines of growth in the sister churches :—

"I was only three weeks in America, and my visit was confined to three cities—Boston, Worcester, and New York. I saw some of the most distinguished representatives of Congregationalism, and heard them in Council, and was thus favourably situated for understanding the aspects of church life which were under consideration ; but the excitement of two very important debates—one in the Council and one in the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions—was so engrossing that I was hindered from making many inquiries which I should have liked to put concerning Congregational thought and work in general.

"The spiritual kinship between English and American Congregationalists is very real. The Congregational type, which we recognise instinctively in Great Britain, is equally recognisable in the United States. There was an 'at home' feeling in my first contact with our brethren which only deepened as I listened to their discussions ; it was easy to follow them in their subtle variations of thought and feeling, even when the subjects discussed were unfamiliar. This

sense of kinship is not the result of common traditions ; our traditions for the last two hundred years have been widely different, and the effect of this difference is apparent. The English Congregationalist is politically and socially a Nonconformist ; the American Congregational minister is one of the clergy of the nation, and an acute eye can see the influence of all that diversity in conditions of which this fact is representative. But the identity of sentiment as to what a Church of Christ is, and how it should be governed, has wrought a likeness in the whole religious and political habit—a fact which indicates clearly that questions of ecclesiastical polity are not the superficialities which some affirm them to be.

“ The same absolute confidence in the fundamental soundness of Congregational principles has produced in America and in England the same comparative indifference to Congregationalism as a denomination. The conviction that is working in the minds of many of us that such indifference is unwise, and that consolidation is demanded of every religious community that would contribute anything of permanent value to the national life, has wrought profoundly in the United States. It is a belief avowed and acted on ; it is a distinct policy which is shaping the co-operative methods of the churches. American Congregationalists are prepared for this to a fuller extent than we are, because of their completer acceptance of the representative principle. We and they have been engaged for several years past in organising our forces for aggressive Christian work ; but they seem to have already learnt the lesson, which we are still spelling out, that for successful organisation the individualistic idea must not be allowed to hinder the action of the representative principle. In the National Council about four thousand five hundred churches were represented by under three hundred delegates ; no delegates were appointed by single churches. Groups of churches and State confederations, themselves representative, appointed delegates, and in no instance was the suggestion made that the resolutions of the Council might be thwarted by an appeal to the constituent churches. The Council disclaims legislative action—it is not an administrative body, like our Church Aid Council ; it is, like our Congregational Union, a body which gathers up and utters the public opinion of Congregationalists, and this representative public opinion, when declared by the vote of a majority of the Council, was accepted by the minority, the difference of opinion not being allowed to trouble subsequent debates. In the Foreign Missions Board, reference was made to a possible refusal of separate churches to accept the decisions of the Board. But this was because the Board is not representative ;

it was an argument used to urge that it should be made representative. In a debate of an unusually exciting character, and in the comments made in the denominational press, there appeared the strong conviction that every difficulty could be harmoniously settled if only the principle of representation were conceded.

"Representative public assemblies are a necessary incident of American life. The vast extent of the national territory prevents any other kind of assembly. It would be as easy for pastors and delegates of all the churches, say of Lancashire, to assemble in New York as for those of California. But loyalty to the representative principle is deeply rooted in American sentiment. The American constitution is settled ; the English constitution is still evolving. In America the constitution was deliberately and sagaciously formed to be the guard of popular liberties ; in England the word has been often used to suppress the popular aspiration. Out of this historic difference, it seems to me, has gradually developed a marked difference between the tone of English and American Liberalism—a difference which shows itself in church, as well as in national life. Distrust of constituted guarantees for individual freedom is the English habit ; confidence in them the American. Let representation and responsibility go together—this is the watchword of American liberty ; the English cherish the right of rebellion, checked only by considerations of its practical wisdom.

"There is no want of personal independence among American Congregationalists. There is as great a variety among American ministers and churches as at home ; I felt as much of the charm and value of diversity in associating with their pastors and members as I should have felt in associating with an equal number of our own. Nor is the so-called Independent type, as contrasted with the so-called Congregational type, absolutely wanting in America. Dr. Leonard Bacon, I believe, looked with disfavour on the formation of the National Council, fearing that it might exert a moral influence almost as hostile to the self-government of the churches as legislative authority would be. And there are some eminent American Congregationalists who do not favour the direct representation of the Congregational churches on the Boards of the benevolent societies. But this feeling is not so prevalent among them as it still is among us, and its decay is due to practical experience. They have learnt, as we, too, are learning, that organised representative and responsible bodies are the most efficient—the only really efficient—means of doing the great work the churches have to do in home and foreign missions.

"One of the most striking features of modern Congregational Church

life in the United States is the enthusiastic acceptance of the idea of the Young People's Societies for Christian Endeavour, and the thoroughness with which these societies are worked. Their distinguishing purpose is to foster the conviction that every young Christian should be actively engaged in Christian work, and to make practical religious zeal and Church fellowship minister to one another. The officers of the societies do not content themselves with inviting the young people to undertake some department of benevolent enterprise ; they mark also the attendance of the young people at church and prayer meetings, as well as at the Sunday services, and point out to them that these opportunities of Christian fellowship should be made use of for the cultivation of spiritual character and for supplying the fitness needed for effective Christian work. Many of our best young people seek a sphere for their evangelistic fervour outside the work of our churches ; they are thus ultimately lost to Congregationalism, and they themselves lose the training and discipline of church life, which we believe to be so necessary for permanent spiritual efficiency. Our young people's guilds will develop their largest possibilities of good in proportion as they add this idea of church relationship to their practical endeavours, and are regarded as organs of the churches—not as substitutes for them.

"On the other hand the idea that the public worship of the congregation, its ministry and its financial arrangements ought to be under the direct control of the church, does not dominate the American mind as it has begun once more to dominate us. The American conscience has not yet revolted, as ours is in revolt, against the pew-rent system, and the exercise of proprietary rights in the house of God. There seems more endeavour to make the Sunday worship such as shall draw large houses than such as shall express and nurture the devotional spirit of the church. The prevalent feeling in some respects seemed to me more like that which found expression forty years ago in Mr. Binney's saying, that Congregationalism was the policy for the English middle classes, than like that which prevails among us to-day. Here, again, we must remember the difference between the historical conditions of English and American life. Only in a few cities is the contrast presented, with which we are so sadly familiar, between the rich and the poor ; and the English tradition of social inequality does not exist anywhere. I was reminded, more than once, of the dreams of a speedily approaching millennium which were cherished in England about the year 1851. The moderator of the National Council said—jocularly, but in good faith—that the New Jerusalem, which was to come down

out of heaven from God, and in whose light the nations were to walk, was already to be found on the American continent. We looked for it in England some years ago. From that hope we have been rudely awakened by the discovery, first, that the working classes, as a whole, were alienated from the churches ; and secondly, by the sight of the misery in which masses of the people are living side by side with the prosperity of the middle classes. This is the revelation which has disgusted us with a middle-class piety, and the confusion of godliness with respectability. No such shock has yet disturbed American Protestantism ; though in cities, such as New York and Boston, there are social conditions which may produce it. In these cities, there is beginning to be a breach with customs that alienate the poor and miserable from the churches. Among the foremost of those who are reviewing old methods, and making new ventures in thought and practice, are some of our Congregational brethren.

"The American people are finding themselves face to face with problems quite as serious as any which are confronting us. If we have an Irish question, they have a negro question. The long-violated law of God is vindicating itself on both sides of the Atlantic, in the exaction of long arrears of penalty. Neither the Irish nor the negro difficulty will be settled by an outburst of philanthropic sentiment ; statesmanship has to translate the generous impulses of a repentant people into legislative action ; and the long time which will elapse before this will assume its final form and achieve its full triumph will test Christian statesmanship to its utmost. American Congregationalists understand our political position ; and theirs is such as we can understand and sympathise with. The self-exclusion of Congregationalism from the south, so long as slavery lasted, because the Congregational churches would not recognise the slave system, will probably appear to have been as wise in policy as it was in fact inevitable. It has given the negroes a confidence in our churches which they do not feel in any other Protestant communities ; and it is only as the negroes perfectly trust the good faith of the whites in dealing with the coloured people that permanent harmony will be possible. The larger question of the relation of the Anglo-Saxon race to the other races of the world presents itself, in a different form, to the English and the Americans. We have our dependencies ; they have their negro, their Indian and their Chinese populations within their own territory. They do not talk, like us, about the 'subject races ;' I did not once hear the word 'subject' from American lips. It was refreshing to be amongst an English people who are not troubled with the question whether the Anglo-

Saxon race is losing its governing power ; to find them discussing a loftier problem—how a Christian nation can welcome to its largest privileges men of all races, in whatever numbers they may arrive, and train them to exercise the equal rights of freemen. In the consideration of this question our Congregational brethren are earnestly and hopefully interesting themselves ; no more arduous problem, no nobler purpose, has ever been presented to men."

CHAPTER XII

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

*“ Ah ! keep, keep them combined !
Else of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive.”*

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

A PROPOSAL for a united meeting of representatives of English and American Congregationalism for the discussion of common theological and administrative problems was partly cause and partly consequence of Mackennal's visit to America, and on his return he threw himself heartily into the advocacy of the projected experiment. He recognised that England had much to learn from the developments of religious enterprise, which take place more rapidly in the free air of the States than in our more conservative atmosphere, and that the American churches might be benefited by coming into closer relation with the evangelical warmth and loyalty to the Divine Lordship of Jesus Christ, of the English churches.

When the arrangements for the first International Council in 1891 had to be made, the choice of the Union fell on Mackennal as the proper person to serve as secretary. He took an active part in all the preparations for the Council, and did something to secure a dignified and effective representation of English Congregationalism. The Council was a decided, even a distinguished success ; quite sufficiently so to secure a repetition which promises to become a factor in the development of both Christian communities.

Mackennal wrote an account of its proceedings for the *Review of the Churches*, which is so characteristic in its selection of points for emphasis, in the breadth of its interests, and its international outlook, that it warrants quotation :— “One of the most important questions to ask concerning any Christian community is, ‘What is its doctrinal position?’ The Council affords an opportunity of answering that question so far as concerns Congregationalists. It was quite characteristic of English Independency that there was no creed recited at any of the meetings of the Council ; nor any discussion of ‘standards’ or ‘symbols. But there was no lack of doctrinal utterances ; the Council was itself a confession. The faith confessed was unmistakably Evangelical. Equally marked was the freedom with which urgent modern theological problems were treated. Scarcely a word was uttered of fear in view of questions in Biblical criticism and changes of doctrinal form ; scarcely a word of suspicion as to the Christian faith of ministers and churches. Dr. Dale says, ‘Judging from the speeches alone, one would infer that among modern Congregationalists decisive theological ascendancy belongs to the “left centre” ; all other parties were most inadequately represented.’ This is probably a true representation of the tone of thought in the churches. Ampler time for discussion would, undoubtedly, have revealed variations ; I do not think any amount of discussion would have disturbed the general impression Dr. Dale records.

“A very interesting acknowledgment was made of the abandonment of Calvinism by English Congregationalists. Dr. Conder spoke of the ‘disappearance of the Old Theology, known inaccurately, but intelligibly enough, as Calvinism ; the system of belief typically exhibited in the ‘Westminster Confession’ and the ‘Assembly’s Catechism.’

This process was indeed going on in the earlier part of the century, gently disguised under the respectful title of 'Moderate Calvinism.' It may now, I suppose, be considered complete and final." He goes on to say:—

"The old theology did not perish under the assault of a rival system. It did not quail before a logic more rigorous than its own. Scarcely have the rudiments of any such system yet appeared. It expired because an atmosphere had been created in which it could not breathe. Some of its 'Five Points' we have willingly handed over, as insoluble problems to philosophy. It has become to us incomprehensible, almost incredible, that such battle-flags as 'supralapsarian' and 'sub-lapsarian' should ever have waved in broad day above the Christian host; or that such questions as the exact place of 'obsignation' in an accurate system of theology should have been gravely discussed in lecture-rooms. But as to the central point (practically, at least) of the Quinquarticular Controversy—the dogma of a limited Atonement—we have frankly come over to the ground of our Wesleyan brethren. We have recognised that such a doctrine contradicts alike the letter and the spirit of the gospel. Of course, we are not singular in this change. It would now be impossible for any theologian of repute to maintain, as did an eminent Presbyterian divine in his disputation with our own Wardlaw, that 'the world,' for whose sins Christ is the propitiation, is 'the elect world.'

"These are not new words on Dr. Conder's lips. In his address from the chair of the Congregational Union, in 1873, he said substantially the same. What is noticeable here is his candid admission of the Wesleyan influence in bringing about this change. The Arminian thinkers have not converted the Calvinistic thinkers; there have been other influences at work to account for the disappearance of so well-compacted a system of thought as Calvinism. The solvent power of the doctrine of Evolution, and the new conceptions of the immanence of God and of the relation of man to Nature, which have been forced on Theism by the prevalence of that doctrine, have been potent factors in the change. The enlarged conception of the significance of the Incarnation, which is one of the

most valuable contributions made to English Theology by the early Broad Church leaders, has had a mighty influence in the same direction. But changes in religious sentiment underlie, and are the cause of changes in doctrine, and the influence of Wesleyanism has been strong here. Not only were the dogmas of a limited Atonement and the restriction of the Divine grace seen to be unchristian when attention was forced on them ; the importance attached in Methodist preaching to the ' new birth ' showed that a Calvinistic creed is not essential to a vivid apprehension of the grace of God as the effective agent all along the process of salvation.

"That the same process has been going on in America was evident, notwithstanding the strong assertions of Dr. Goodwin's Council Sermon. An earnest young preacher from St. Louis, Dr. Stimson, said :—

"In England, unless I am mistaken, you, brethren, are fighting Calvinism as something which came to you from the seventeenth century, from the combative experiences that were represented in the discussions that gathered about the Westminster Confession. Calvinism in America means something far different, it means the spirit of John Eliot leaving his parish and his home and burying himself in Indian wigwams, because he believed that the Indian was his brother—a truth which we hardly yet believe in America ; it means the Calvinism of Edward Payson, who had such visions of God in his daily parish work that he prayed they might be taken from him lest he die in them. We believe in the Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards, who gave up his home and everything that made life worth living to a scholar and a gentleman, to live in poverty among the people who were willing to hear him, for his conviction of the truth. Therefore, I am not ashamed to say, as one living in the condition which I have described, burdened not in heart only, burdened not in head only, but burdened in body as well under the pressure that is upon me, as the ebb and flow of a great city beats over me as it does over my church, I am not ashamed to say that in this sense I and my people are Calvinists.'

"Of course the answer is obvious—this is not Calvinism,

it is Christianity—and it was given by Mr. Rogers, who said :—

“ In the sense indicated by the earnest and vigorous brother who has just sat down, we are all Calvinists. But in looking at Calvinism he has simply taken out of it the spirit of consecration and devotion to Christ, which is absolutely independent of any particular ‘ism,’ and which belongs to all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth. I am rejoiced to think that there are men who could not agree with the doctrines of Calvinism, who have that spirit quite as earnestly and quite as intensely as the noble men to whom he has made reference.”

Mackennal’s comment is :—“ It is well to know that Calvinism stands, generally, in America, not for arbitrary decrees of salvation, but, as Dr. Stimson put it, for the Fatherhood of God. But the wisdom and the fairness of retaining a controversial name, when the essential points in the controversy are given up, may be questioned. It ought to be reckoned a gracious thing, tending both to truth and catholicity, for Christian communities frankly to acknowledge the abandonment of an old position, and with equal frankness to say when a sister community has wrought their conversion.”

Then follows a brief account of the Scottish delegation and the welcome given to Dr. James Morison, “ once deprived of a Presbyterian ministry for heresy, and now acknowledged by all branches of Protestantism as a trusted expositor of Scripture ”; next a summary of the remarkable movement which led to the formation of seven hundred Congregational churches in Sweden, with a membership of 100,000 persons; then a review of progress in Holland and the Western States of America.

“ Social questions formed an important part of the programme of the Council, an evening being devoted to ‘Labour and Capital,’ ‘Land and National Prosperity,’ and ‘Liquor Laws.’ ‘The Attitude of the Church to the

Social Movements of our Time' was also set forth. The significance of this evening did not so much lie in any proposal that churches should throw themselves into political movements—though where the political movements represent moral forces and not traditionalist parties there is no reason why they should not—as in the altered attitude of Congregational leaders to economic questions. It has been by no accident that English Nonconformity has been identified with the 'Manchester School' in the past. There are no more marked individualists anywhere than Congregationalists; and where individualism needed to be asserted, they might be looked for. Now, however, that the condition of the people everywhere reveals that individualism alone is not enough, they refuse to make a fetish of individualism. There is no desire to turn chapels and schoolrooms into political committee rooms; but there ought to be no mistake about the fact that the attitude of the Congregational churches to social and economic questions is not altogether what it was.

"There were representatives of other Evangelical churches—all the Methodist bodies, Presbyterians, Baptists, and the Society of Friends—attending the Council, and before the Council rose, a resolution was submitted and unanimously adopted in the following terms:—

'Resolved, that for the better manifestation of the unity of the Church of Christ throughout the world, this International Council of Congregational churches will heartily welcome a fraternal federation, without authority, of all Christian bodies at such early date as the providence of God will permit.'

This is the immediate result of the Council which Mackennal wants to emphasise. He regards this resolution as a friendly challenge to the different national organisations to take steps towards common action, and perhaps federation among Christian denominations; and

then follows a resolution, evidently drawn up by himself, which is to be moved by Dr. Guinness Rogers at the Autumnal Meetings at Southport. The resolution is important as expressing the grounds on which Mackennal's immediately subsequent action in the Free Church Federation movement was to be based.

“That this Assembly is deeply convinced that the circumstances of the time imperatively require the cultivation of closer relations between the various Free Evangelical Churches of the country. They have not only common principles to maintain and common interests to guard, but they have a common work to do, which is seriously hindered by the want of a better understanding amongst themselves. The time has, perhaps, not yet come when any movement towards their complete amalgamation would have any prospect of success, and premature proposals of such organic union would probably have a separating rather than a uniting tendency. But there is a widespread and growing conviction that sectarian competition is a disaster to all parties engaged in it, and a grievous dishonour to the one Lord to whom all alike own allegiance. Despite the differences in the extent and grounds of their Nonconformity, it is increasingly felt that the various Free Churches are united by spiritual affinities and interests which are deeper and stronger than any theological or ecclesiastical diversities. This Assembly is further of opinion that it is eminently desirable that opportunity should be afforded for the development and manifestation of this essential unity. The holding of a Free Church Congress, at such intervals as may be thought best, would, in its judgment, be of incalculable advantage. In order to its success it might be necessary that in the first instance it should be a Congress, not of churches, but of individuals. Its practical utility would, however, be enormously increased if the representative bodies would co-operate in organising the same. That this Union instructs the committee to forward this resolution to the representative bodies of other Free Churches, and to open negotiations which may lead to the summoning of such an assembly, if possible, in the course of 1892.”

The concluding passage of Mackennal's article preserves an interesting record of a transition stage in English Congregationalism. “Among the items of business to come before the Assembly at Southport, the most

important is the election of secretary to the Union. Additional importance has been given to this matter by the announcement made by one of the delegates of his intention to raise the question of the uniting under the same management of all the missionary and benevolent home work of Congregationalists.

“The chief hindrance to such union hitherto, which would have undoubted advantages, many and great, has been dread of centralisation and dislike of representative church government. The tradition of English Independents has been that of one of the small Swiss Cantons, where there is no Parliament nor representative body; but every man takes his share in legislation and administration. Their own growth and the increasing complexity of social life are forcing on them the problem of organisation.

“A completer organisation among Congregationalists would almost certainly result not merely in an increase of denominational *esprit de corps*, but in a brightened prospect of reunion of churches. There is much in Congregationalism fitting its adherents to be a mediating influence among the churches. . . .

“One of the vice-presidents of the Council, in a buoyant and humorous speech at a social meeting, affirmed it as the special mission of the Congregational Churches, not ‘to go down and reach the lower classes and lift them up,’ but ‘to take men and women that are capable of thought, capable of intellectual as well as moral and spiritual development, and lift them up to a higher plane as human beings; make them more sensible of God and the things that God has put into this world, so beautiful, and so full of His love. Lift them up to make them worthy of His work, and able to do His work, instead of treating them as babes sucking milk, just keeping enough

life in them to get them into heaven before they die of inanition, of marasmus—that is Congregationalism, and that is its mission.'

"The way in which this sentiment was received marks the advance in Congregational sentiment during fifty years. It is just about so long since Mr. Binney affirmed the same thing. 'Congregationalism,' he is reported to have said, 'is especially for the middle classes.' Then the phrase was welcomed as a happy formula describing a state of things with which we ought to content ourselves—an ordinance of God which it was vain, almost impious, to resist. Now, the statement was again and again repudiated, and always with vehemence, almost indignation. Not even the declaration of the President, that 'no weightier words than these were spoken at the Council,' has secured them a favourable hearing. Ever since Mr. Binney formulated the maxim, it has been felt by many that it was a misleading way of putting what an evangelical denomination should be ashamed of, not an ordinance of God to be accepted.

"And yet it is well that the words have been spoken, and that the explanation has been given that it was the 'special mission' of Congregationalism which was in the speaker's view. The Church of God has no 'special mission'; a 'special mission' is a function of a member, not of the body. The fathers and founders of English Congregationalism believed that they were setting out the doctrine of 'the Church' in their separation; they would have resented nothing more keenly than the idea that they were founding special societies. Dr. Pope, at the Jubilee Meeting of the Congregational Union in Manchester, ten years ago, spoke of Congregationalists as having been put in trust with one of the noblest church principles, which he thus defined: 'The grand idea of the dignity, sanctity,

and inviolable rights of the individual church, I say, as, so to speak, containing in itself by epitome all the notes and attributes, rights and prerogatives and duties of the Church universal.' Among these notes and attributes, rights, and prerogatives and duties, is catholicity. The consciousness of a 'special mission,' if it have indeed emerged as a permanent fact in Congregational life, can only lead Congregationalists to seek more earnestly for union with others who will both supplement their deficiencies and receive of their fulness."

When the Council was successfully over the Union Committee sent Mackennal a cheque for £100. This cheque he returned with a gracious expression of his thanks. He said, in explanation of his action, that in work which he had done *con amore*, and with other motives alone, he could not bring himself to think that after all he was a paid servant. This shrinking from the position of being a paid public servant played some part in the attitude he subsequently took up when the Union tried to secure his services in another capacity.

To Mr. Jesse Haworth he sent a brief account of his own impressions of the first International Council :—

" 16th July, 1891.

" You will be glad to hear from me, in addition to what you may have read in the *Guardian* daily, that the Council has abundantly repaid all the thought and labour which have been devoted to it. I am quite sure that the prayer and hope of many in our congregations must have risen up to heaven, and that spiritual benediction has been given in response to those who have taken part in our proceedings. Up to now, there has been nothing unworthy of an assemblage of lofty-purposed and spiritually-minded men.

" I have had to spare myself a little to-day by remaining away from the afternoon and evening meetings. I felt a little overstrained nervously, and the rest has been gradually restoring me.

" I should be glad, if you have the opportunity, and will tell the congregation on Sunday, what a privilege their pastor feels it to have

worked for a Council that is likely to have abiding religious results of a high order, not only on our own churches, but on our sister churches too, and how grateful I am to my own people who have spared me for this work." . . .

The regard in which he was held by American Congregationalists from this time was well expressed by Dr. Amory Bradford at the time of his death:—

"Dr. Alexander Mackennal was one of the noblest men that any of us have ever known. He was a born leader, he was a statesman, he was a very humble and earnest Christian. He was a man who had proved himself worthy of being trusted in many ways. He had received the honour and the trust of the churches of Great Britain, and I may go further, I think, and say that he had received their almost universal admiration and love.

"And what I say of your churches I say also of those on the American continent. Twice he had represented the Congregational Union of England and Wales there, he had preached in many of our churches, he had for two Sundays preached in the church of which I am pastor. He had everywhere won our love and our gratitude.

"To him more than any other man, if I understand the situation, is due the federation of the Evangelical Free Churches of this country, and the fact that the International Congregational Council has ever had a being. I feel I can hardly express the debt of my own personal gratitude to Dr. Mackennal, and the greatness of my appreciation of him. A fellowship of churches that has in one generation to remember two such men as Robert William Dale and Alexander Mackennal surely is very rich in its memories."

CHAPTER XIII

A SPIRITUAL DIRECTORATE

*“He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them: thus he came at length.
To find a stronger faith his own.”*—TENNYSON.

THE following letters continue the interesting correspondence on matters of faith and conduct between Mackennal and Mrs. A. The letters cover the years 1888—1897.

CROSS BEARING.

“21st March, 1888.

“ . . . Your friend’s trouble is an indication of a very common state of mind just now, and one which deserves our tenderest consideration. It is wholly unselfish in its purpose, and its heroic strain is neither forced nor unreal. But isn’t there this error at the bottom of it—that duty is estimated, rather by what pain it costs us, than by what good we are doing to others? A curious, unselfish egoism after all. And how wonderfully Christ has prepared us for it. ‘*Ye shall drink of My cup*,’ etc., but ‘*to sit on My right Hand*,’ etc. There are those for whom this has been prepared. He can say to us all, ‘You shall share in my tribulation,’ but there are those for whom the heroic call, the call to special distinction in the way of sacrifice, is prepared; elect sufferers, as there are elect thinkers, lovers, doers, etc.

“ I think if we keep before us clearly the question, ‘what good am I doing?’ we shall be helped in this matter. If we are really benefiting others by being happy more than we should by being miserable, then it is God’s will for us to be happy,

and the unfaithfulness is seen in refusing to be so. Of course, many will take the happiness without considering the doing good by it ; but we must not allow a widespread selfishness to blind us to the fact that God has called some to signal usefulness through signal happiness ; and often calls most of us to be useful through our joy. Only let us be ready, when He calls us to suffer, to accept His will.

“ I think if you carefully study the passages in which Christ speaks of bearing the cross, you will see He has in view definite identification with Him in all it involves. And it is so used in Paul’s Epistles. Another view of the cross has come into prominence in our days as one result of our mode of theological thinking—the inward struggle of love with righteousness, conscience and sympathy in conflict. For this, too, all Christians must be prepared. We could gain relief by casting off those whom we love ; or by dulling our perceptions of sin. If we will do neither, we must be cross-bearers. Sacrifice is the only relief for such a conflict ; and the fruit of sacrifice is its reward. ‘ What can I do for Him ? ’ is the impulse ; and this may bring us to Christ the sacrifice, if there is no sacrifice which we can offer.

“ In both these ideas of cross-bearing, shame-bearing or sorrow-bearing, in our testimony, and the inner conflict of love and righteousness, there is something distinct from self-torture, or the desire to suffer for suffering’s sake, or even that we may sympathise with the suffering Saviour, and so, I think, it would be found in all cases, which might fairly come under the general designation of cross-bearing. We need not go out of our way to find crosses ; some day we shall find our own cross, and the Master will bid us take it up.” . . .

In a letter dated May 20th, 1888, Mrs. A. writes to thank Dr. Mackennal for a sermon he has sent her. Sometimes, she says, he

writes a sentence of which she understands one half but not the other, e.g., "He who has power to redeem us by His death, because He is able to quicken us by His life." She cannot attach any clear ideas to the word "ransom." She has no light on the meaning of "substitution." The law of the spiritual world is that the gain of one is the gain of all. If Moses or Paul (Exodus xxxii. 32, Romans ix. 3) thought that their rejection or ruin would make the acceptance or restoration of others possible—or easier, they ignored and misunderstood so far the heart of God. Paul could not be anathema. We can help others by the sacrifice of ease, happiness, life even, but not by the sacrifice of our true life, our union with God, even if we could make that sacrifice.

Is not this even more true of Christ himself? Where then is the possibility of saying sacrifice. It is plain that unspeakable loss and suffering and sacrifice were involved in doing His revealing work; and that He had to share man's life before He could impart His own. But language is used in the Bible implying something different, something legal, from which one infers quite another kind of God. About that she has no creed at all. The difficulty has long been in her mind, but she has only now been able to formulate it.

"30th May, 1888.

"... I have not your letter with me, but I should like to say a word or two about your sentence on that bit in my sermon relating to the sacrifice of Christ. I cannot, any more than you, solve the difficulties you speak of; but these two things seem to be clearly connected—our inability either to give ourselves absolutely to, and the corresponding inability to give ourselves absolutely up for, one another. There are certain suggestions of a philosophical sort connected with this problem, which might come up in conversation; I don't write them because they are speculative, and I would like to keep on ground where our feet may tread firmly.

"It is very plain, is it not, that Christ contemplated giving Himself up for the sins of the world? It was in His mind to make Himself—His temporal human self—a sacrifice for humanity. He gave His flesh and blood, *i.e.*, His human self—to be our meat and drink. That is not

possible for us; we have a discipline to be accomplished; our discipline, to put it broadly, is to be saved, and in this to effectively save mankind. Christ, too, had His discipline, it was 'being made perfect through sufferings' to be the Saviour.

"Here, too, there are wondrous theological mysteries—using the word of surpassing revelations, rather than of hopeless obscurities—suggested concerning the relation between the divine and human natures, with the points of analogy and difference in Christ and in us. But on these, too, I forbear to dwell.

"Let us come to another matter. That being made partakers of Christ, which He sets forth as eating His flesh and drinking His blood, Paul tells us involved another fact. We died with Him to sin; the sharing the new life involves the entire cessation of the old. We want that truth, don't we? Nothing that we can do can blot out, atone for, be a sacrifice for, the old; nor can any self-devotion on our part blot out our past. But Christ has done it for us; and He chose to do it, meant to do it, was sanctified, consecrated and sent into the world, to do this.

"Put that into the old governmental language, and it is a forensic atonement! Put it into ethical language, it means the moral influence on us of Christ's death and resurrection and ascension. Let us use neither governmental nor ethical language, but use the language which our own experience prompts; it is the joyous utterance of our own spiritual certainty; in Christ Jesus we are new creatures, sharers of His death as well as of His resurrection.

"You need not answer this; I know quite well you are not intending to challenge it. I am quite aware you have not been inviting discussion, but hinting that I should speak of the fulness of my hope, which is also yours.

"May you always enjoy the 'green pastures and the still waters.'"

SANCTIFICATION.

"June 1st, 1889.

"... I have not forgotten my promise to send you my paper on the atonement. But the book in which it appears is out of print, and my copy is lent, which means, is lost. I have forgotten to whom I lent it, and the borrower has forgotten to return it. If I can get a copy I will send it to you.*

"Are you wanting to ask me—do I still believe in sanctification as a personal blessing as well as a doctrine? Yes, in a doctrine because as a personal blessing I believe in it more firmly than ever. The sermon on the Prince of the World's Coming will tell you that. I have settled down into a life as calm, almost, and free from enthusiastic apprehension of truth, as when you first knew me. But I know that the well of water is springing up into life eternal. All the more I think, because of the absence of enthusiasm, can I estimate the value of what I have received, and no words of mine—even in hours of devotion—can express my sense of reality. Self-dissatisfaction is profounder, often more bitter, than ever it was before, but there is not a shadow of dissatisfaction with my faith, for there is only triumph in its source and object.

"Is it not so with you? Can you not pass from *the faith* to *your faith*, with the assurance that your faith is but the everflowing and enchanneled streamlet from the enduring fount? I am sure it is so, and I pray that your love may abound yet more and more and be in knowledge.

"This is a Saturday evening pastor's prayer and benediction. Often at such times, I run over one after another of those whom it is good to know and love and pray for—my children first, both as children and as mine; my people

* See Chap. III.

next, and you are not forgotten then. This is a lovely evening, a soft, full light, with peace from the setting sun. Peace from the setting sun? Our Sun of Righteousness never sets, however we roll round into the shadow to roll up again into the light."

In June, 1889, a long letter came from Mrs. A. telling of prolonged and serious illness, during which she had lain much alone wrestling with her thoughts. "I would not have these long, dark, solitary nights with the Presence that has blessed them shortened by half-an-hour. It has been well worth while to cough and ache all over." She has been thinking much about the teaching of the Keswick school, which had representatives in Bowdon, and the whole bent of her thinking is against their doctrine and proceedings. She knows that Dr. Mackennal entertains deep personal respect for them, will go as far as he can with them, and probably refuse to allow any words of condemnation to be dragged out of him. But she feels that his apprehension of the truth is quite different from theirs. She believes all the more that he is right because he speaks of effort and of dissatisfaction with himself.

The confusion seems to turn on the meaning and function of the *will*. They teach that "we are born with our backs to God," that the will is wholly corrupt, and that nothing but self-righteousness and pride can come from the struggles of a corrupted will. If we cannot use our wills for any good till we are sanctified whose fault is it? If we must give up our wills to God, how can we do it without His grace since we have no power? Yet we cannot get the grace till we have done so.

Although the people who hold these views do much good, they also do incalculable harm by their way of putting things. They thin away to nothing the sense of moral responsibility and loosen the moral fibre. Responsibility becomes a fiction. The analogies about dear little flowers that grow in the sun and rain do not meet the case. We are not vegetables. Even the vine and the branches does not cover this view of things, for the command "abide in Me" implies an appeal to moral agents, capable of choice. Jesus Christ constantly appeals to the wills of men, implying that they can choose and can reject. This power is of course also from God, but a consecration of the will in such a case must surely include rising up and using all the strength we have. She writes strongly because the books—the good mischievous books—have misled her. To a weak indolent soul,

ignorant of its God-given powers and obligations these say, "cease from striving, be passive, let yourself go," when they should say, "*ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin*," etc. As to the promised blessing, it is not as some say an invisible power stepping in to lift the passive soul over each temptation as it comes, but a new life from God coming into the region behind the will, and behind the consciousness, changing the whole bent of a character and its spontaneous attitude towards good and evil. The new life brings with it what Bushnell calls a ruling love, making toil inevitable and conflict with evil a natural joy.

She does not know whether Dr. Mackennal will rebuke or confirm this view. The "vegetable gospel" would suit the "old man" much better if it were but true. But she has paid dearly for its failure. So will some of the young people who tell her how the meetings of the Keswick type "muddle their ideas." Would it be true to say that the condition is *doing* and the blessing is *being*, resulting of course in better and higher doing?

THE KESWICK SCHOOL.

"July 11th, 1889.

"Your letter startled me this afternoon when I took it out to answer it. I read the date June 9th, and saw I had had it a month. That was the only part which startled me. I think you are quite right in the substance of it; my only surprise is that you should have been in such trouble fearing you were wrong. Have you a little exaggerated your anxiety? Has the intellectual difficulty of co-ordinating and subordinating the different factors in the spiritual life loomed more largely in your sickness than it needed to have done? Or do you now seriously think you were bewildered and hindered? I ask for this reason. All my tastes and a good deal of my judgment are distinctly opposed to the school of teachers you refer to. If of late I have not opposed them, it has been for two reasons. First, they do vividly set forth the spiritual reality of the divine life as contra-distinguished from the ethical result of our faith; and next, I have opposed them

so long and so much that I was delighted at a good reason for being at peace with them. But if their teaching is as mischievous as you say, I must be on my guard not even to seem to countenance their errors.

“There are two things about which I am tolerably decided. One is that freedom is an essential element of moral personality, and that God is always dealing with us as free personalities. The next point is, a faith, a hope—though not a clear conviction—that at some time it will be revealed to us that there is an organic life, the members of which are free personalities, and that when we speak of the common life of Christians, of Christ in us, the divine life in us, we are using language which, although transcending our power of apprehension, expresses a reality, the deepest reality of our being.

“I believe, too, that both of these truths come into our consciousness, though the mode in which they do so is unintelligible, and sometimes we are more conscious of the one and sometimes of the other. When my little boy went from Ramsey to Laxey, he walked part of the way and was carried part of the way, and was supported by his father’s arms part of the way while he helped in walking ; and at any moment he would have said this is the way we go to Laxey. Of course, we never gave him the sort of help you are speaking of, but you will see what I mean.

“Strangely enough, as contrasting with the tone of wonder in your letter as to whether I should not censure you for falling from the faith, it reached me at a time when, in my own experience and in my preaching, the need and value of ‘doing’ have been very present with me. But the feeling of the importance of doing has not taken away my sense of absolute dependence on God, and the rest in Him of the worker is as perfect as the rest in Him of the pray-er ; if indeed, in the unity of the

spiritual life we can separate and say—this is working, this is praying.

“ I found a copy of the ‘ Symposium on the Atonement,’ and send it to you. I wonder if my articles will at all meet your thinking. Return it when you have quite finished with it, not before.

“ Have you read McLeod Campbell’s ‘ Bread of Life ’? If I am not mistaken, that will meet your thoughts on the subject of active receiving of the divine spirit. I send it in hope it may. Why I send the *Christian World Pulpit* you will soon discover.

“ This is a short letter, for I am very busy; and indeed, I am so confident that you have met your own trouble about the matter of your last letter that I have not thought a longer letter needed. Tell me if I am wrong.”

In March, 1890, Mrs. A. underwent an operation which involved being under an anæsthetic for some time. She wrote to Mackennal full of the horror of the experience. It has convinced her that “ human capacity for pain is infinite and human consciousness immortal.” Her courage did not break down while she retained consciousness, but “ whoever carried her to the brink of the abyss pushed her over and has not been near her since.” She feels that she has visited the realm of spirits in torment, and finds it hard to believe in the love of a God who permits such a region to exist; and who yet allows children to be born into a world when this may be their destiny. While under the anæsthetic she cried out repeatedly, “ Oh ! tell me—be quick—tell me that this is the will of God ! ”

Mackennal’s reply is both faithful and judicious :—

ROBUST COMMONSENSE.

“ 25th March, 1890.

“ Are you well enough for a little scolding? You are constructing a universe out of your own emotions; and because remembrance may be undying you are throwing the shadow of your hours (2 hours \times 60 = 120 minutes) over all eternity. You ought to pull yourself up and say,

‘this won’t do, and I know it.’ Yes, children are born, but not, as you say, into any ‘region’ which you have visited. Few of them, probably, will ever visit it, and they who do will come out of it after a little sojourn there.

“If you had any responsibility for the continuance of the world, you would not dare to annihilate it. You would know, you would even *feel*, if you were called to act as your wounded sensibilities prompt you to think you would like to act, that it would be cruel and unreasonable. If that be so, you must adopt some method of bringing yourself under the control of your wiser, better thoughts. Christ has unbarred the gates of hell—come out of it.

“Will you read ‘In Memoriam,’ lays lvii. and lviii. ‘Peace, come away ;’ ‘In those sad words,’ and compare the latter with Psalm lxxxiii. 15.

“I am not at all afraid that you will think me cruel for writing thus ; and I am not confounding your crying out with impiety. If you were impious, you wouldn’t suffer so much. When you are better you shall read the Book of Job once more, but don’t touch it just now. No ! I will tell you what you shall think of—how the Saviour cried, ‘*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?*’ And then remember His question, ‘*Can you drink of the cup I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with ?*’ Of course, you can ; you have said it and have stood to it, and would again if the need should arise ; which may God in His mercy avert. But, oh ! the need of patience. We can endure ; can we be patient after endurance ? ‘*Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*’ Only think—perfect and entire, wanting nothing. You have made the discovery that you were a few steps off perfection, instead of just awaiting the last little touch ; and that

needn't distress you much. It's a good world yet, although you are not absolutely angelic.

"I have been praying for you, but I won't tell you so, because you don't want melting but hardening. And you have come through your trouble like a Christian, although not a perfect one yet. I earnestly hope there will be no physical drawback; I'm not afraid for your soul."

"9th April, 1890.

"The ecstatic is not necessarily the visionary, still less the unreal. Truth may awaken us to ecstasy of feeling. But we are not to live in the exalted feeling, nor try to reproduce it. I think it is sometimes a duty to repress feeling, the purest and most warranted, to repress it even before God, lest we be unfit for the common demands of life and the changing aspects of duty."

CHRIST, AND THE WORLD'S AGNOSTICISM.

"4th December, 1890.

"... It so happened, soon after I read your letter, that I was reading John xvii., Christ's prayer for His disciples, and the last verse struck me very forcibly, '*I made known unto them thy name, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them.*' I will make a suggestion or two to you about it, which you will fill up. It is Christ's confession of the world's agnosticism. 'We do not see Him in nature and history,' men say; and the Son, who does see Him, turns their acknowledgment into a sad confession. And then—there is Christ's way of dealing—*these have known that Thou has sent Me.* We know by the surest of all knowledge that Christ is divine. There is, too, the growing acquaintance with God which Christ is determined, as well as able, to impart to these. '*I have declared unto*

them Thy Name, and will declare it.' And the unending fellowship.

"When we find we cannot impart the knowledge we have, we have to remember that neither could He. And yet He had confidence that He could save the world. The Cross is there. His death unknown ; the message rejected, which He intended to be for the light and recovery of the world.

"I don't know if you will find any light here. You will find none that you can impart. . . . Infidelity always breaks down on its constructive side. Even the efforts to construct a theory of the fourth gospel, other than that it is the representation of Christ, given by one who knew Him and knew the needs of the first sub-apostolic age, have all failed ; as did the more ambitious attempts to write a life of Jesus with the faith of Christ left out. . . ."

In March, 1891, Mrs. A. is passing through a zone of faith's conflict which many will recognise as a common one. She believes Christ did "know the Father." On His word she hopes in God. She lives by Him and in God because He bears witness of the Father. But all the other facts of life seem to point the other way. When people say to her, "Of course I believe in God whose works are so full of beauty and goodness, but I can't believe in Christ ; I doubt the records, and do not believe in the miracles," she is dumb. To her, human life seems every day a more hopeless, mocking, terrible tangle, and if there is no light in Christ there is none anywhere. Does God care at all for our bodies, for our suffering ? Is an individual life of any value in His eyes ? What does Dr. Mackennal think of the tragedy of a mother's death at the birth of her child ? Must we not say at once, "There is nothing too horrible to happen to your children, nothing too dreadful for God to allow, but you have to believe that if it does come, it is 'all for the best,' and is allowed for a good reason which you cannot know."

"26th March, 1891.

"Your letter was sent on to me. I wish it were of any use to scold you, for, indeed, I think you are to be blamed

for letting go what you have received and not building yourself up in your most holy faith. Just 'realise,' to use your own word, what your state of mind is. You have received so much from Christ, and you know what the Father is to Him, and yet you cherish thoughts that cannot but be offensive to the Father's heart. You are paying no heed to the first commandment, '*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*,' etc., all this—which would be mere verbiage to one not believing in Christ—is and must be regarded as offensive, if you have known the blessedness in Christ.

"I have used a word 'cherish,' the force of which I should like you to dwell on. I do not mean that, lying down weak and weary as you are to-day, you have power to bid these thoughts go, but I do mean that it is in our power to discipline ourselves; to bid ourselves live a life of thought or faith or feeling. It is often necessary to harden ourselves, but to do so needs much self-discipline. To live in enjoyment of the good may have as its compensation to live in misery under the evil, and if we want to be strengthened for *doing* and for *seeing*, both of which are better than feeling, we must be on our guard even against the indulgence of the purest sensibilities.

"You seem to think I share your estimate of life—as when you speak of those 'who know,' and in your story of the dead mother. I repudiate absolutely your conclusions—and that terrible charge you bring against God, 'He lets children be famished and tortured to death,' etc., fills me with horror. It is not a *true* view of life you are taking; you are not a bit nearer the truth than the bright young spirits you speak of with their deistic faith. There *is* what they see as there *is* what you see, but are you even as near to the truth as they in your practical conclusion? They see the light. When they see the

darkness too—whether such a vision of Christ be vouchsafed them as God has granted you or not—I pray that they may never forget that light has been, and is for many, even if temporarily not for them. I shall not regard them as truer or braver souls if they rush to the assertion that the light is only a curious contrivance for increasing the torture of men.

“ Is it likely, indeed, that any one of us is of so great importance that all ‘ this unintelligible world ’ must have been nicely elaborated to delude and then disillusion him ? Is it not much more likely that here and there we in our unhappiness lose the sense of proportion, and err from truth even in our determination that we will be candid ?

“ For myself I may say—it is no argument, I know, but it may help you to know how others feel—it has been the ‘ realising ’ of sorrow which has been the great calming, reconciling influence of life. I have thought of the pangs of sickness and of blighted hopes and of bereavements until I could have cried out too against it all. But it has always been the actual contact with sorrow, personal contact, which I have known in some very severe forms, and by sympathy with others, which has set me right. And what is more, that is the common experience. Yours is the delusion. I appeal to the common experience of life. So true are Christ’s words: ‘ *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.* ’ ”

Mrs. A. replies: “ That in my letter which ‘ fills you with horror ’ fills me with the same. Only I cannot see differently yet. You do not really answer me, even as to your own belief—I think because you take for granted that I know it.” She understands that there may be good divine reasons for leaving us to the working of natural laws of cause and effect, and that God may turn suffering to spiritual good. But is this all? She wants to know for practical purposes whether God has any care for an individual life. Are prayer, trust, faith and

hope to be applied to personalities or not? It is the individual body that is on her mind. She has even tried the plan of shutting her eyes to the facts, but with her this plan is an absolute failure—she cannot.

PAIN.

"30th March, 1891.

" . . . I certainly believe that God is personally present in the whole sphere of things, and that the physical world no more shuts me out from His direct action than any other world. Indeed, I regard the limitations of God's action as being moral and spiritual, not physical. Therefore I pray and trust and call on Him for help and guidance and sympathy—sometimes too for His control, interference—along the whole line of life. But I don't pray for all I wish for, or should like. I cannot explain it to others, but I seem to know how to pray for things and when to refrain. And I believe that we all may have that direction in prayer. This is what Christ seems to me to mean when He speaks of our asking in His Name and having what we ask for.

I hope this answers your question. If I did not so answer it before, there are two reasons. First, I shrink exceedingly from having to be catechised or to argue about what is so purely a matter of personal experience; and yet if I say I do so and so, or think so and so, or feel so and so, I ought to be ready to answer the question—"why?"—and all the questions which follow on that. And yet I am perfectly aware that my habit is no argument to other people; and, may I say so, you will argue about even the incommunicable inner consciousness.

" But my second reason was stronger than this. I cannot imagine any theory of God's sphere of operation at all affecting our feeling about pain and its presence in the world. I have my own half-formed idea about God's method of government and training, but it

doesn't touch the state of mind which I think is revealed in your letter.

"On any theory we have to face one or two facts. This, for instance, that pain is here, a something to be reckoned with on any theory and by us all. Next, it is perfectly evident that pain seems to be out of all relation to individual deserts, or capacity of endurance and profiting—that is, out of all relation to individual moral discipline. My belief that pain is a necessary part of the discipline of humanity, that it is not out of relation, but in most intimate and immediate relation to the moral discipline of humanity as a whole, and that the secret of individual life is the part it plays in, what it contributes to and receives from, the life of the whole humanity, may help me in certain aspects of the question, but I don't see how it would help you in the cases you have put in your letter. That is, you choose to emphasise the individual suffering, as if certain sufferers ought to be excluded from the operation of the general law.

"It seems to me that, having clearly recognised the two points I have put above, what we have to do is to educate ourselves in the best way possible to bear as we can what we have to bear for ourselves, and what is still more painful, what we see in the case of others. To cry out when the stroke becomes painful is an infirmity from which we shall not be delivered by a new and larger theory of the universe, but by self-discipline.

"I wonder if you follow me, and if you feel that this is as tender in intention as it may seem hard in utterance.

"You speak of my 'convincing you that yours is the delusion.' I have no such hope. If you could be convinced of that you would not need to be convinced. You are living in a range of feelings which separate you from the common experience of mankind, and you speak in a

tone of compassion or of wonder of those who either do not see all the misery which you see, or, seeing it, allow themselves to be cheerful. The only thing which can benefit you is to come out of that region, but this seems to you unfaithfulness to the truth, want of 'intellectual seriousness.'

"What I maintain is, that the enormous majority of mankind is against you, including the sufferers themselves; nay, the sufferers are most conspicuously against you; it is only here and there a thinker on suffering who is with you. Somehow or other, there are sources of strength and consolation opened up with the pain; some of them are natural, physiological, delusive, what you will, but they need to be taken into account to qualify what you say; others of them are ethical, spiritual, Christian, and they do not simply 'qualify,' they (and I cite all noble literature, only the self-consciousness of those ages which have sickened in luxury, carnal, intellectual, emotional, is on the other side) 'sanctify' the suffering, make it appear a light and passing affliction which we may sympathise with, but which it is unworthy of us to be for ever dwelling on. Is this not so? If the world could not be lived in, people would not live in it. If it can be lived in, the fact at once refutes your suggestions.

"You speak of my 'displeasure.' In the etymological sense I am 'displeased,' but not in the popular sense. I am too full of sympathy with you for that. I know how hard it must be for one so shaken as you have been in many ways to be still, and hear a strong man say his say. But I do earnestly believe that the instincts of strength are more trustworthy than the instincts of sickness, and what is more, I believe that the strength is very much the outcome of a determination not to let the whole life be

submerged in sorrow. What moves me on your account is that, having been brought up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, you have allowed yourself to be again entangled. Surely Christ Himself might say to you:

“‘The invisible world with thee hath sympathised ;
Be thy affections soothed and solemnised.’

“You know ‘Laodamia,’ of course. I think a reading of it, with Christian thought for ever inserting itself between the lines, might be a good tonic for you. Especially if anything offends you in the austerity of the poem, that might be beneficial ; and if you are led on to cry out, ‘But Wordsworth didn’t know,’ be sure he did know, and was suppressing *διαβόλας* of his own. If you don’t read Greek I may mention that that word means dark suggestions of evil, accusing hints either in reference to God or man—*diabolas*, that is the word, and *diabolus* (devil) is the Greek name describing one aspect of the satanic character.

“I hope this letter is not unbearably egotistic. I have been almost compelled to make it so, for you have asked what I think, and it was necessary for me to add to the statement of what I think the other statement that my thoughts didn’t go very far. . . .”

THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN AND ITS CRITICS.

The next letter begins by referring to a recent occasion when Mrs. A. met Dr. Mackennal, and the subject of conversation was the Gospel of St. John. She had hoped to receive from him some convincing refutation of the critics who deny the authenticity of that gospel. Nothing but the self-evident and felt divineness of the later chapters in St. John had stood between her and materialism. Although a daily experience for which she is constantly grateful would make materialism impossible for her now, there are hundreds in her former case. She can hardly bear to open her Bible now where it used to fall open of itself. She used to think “no one but the Son of God could have spoken thus. This is Heaven language. This speaker

knows, where we only hope." Now she is told that some disciple in the second century wrote the Gospel to fit his theory of Christianity. She would not care whether the writer were John or someone else if only she could be sure that Jesus Christ did say "I know the Father;" "I go to Him;" "Let not your heart be troubled;" "I will receive you to Myself;" "If it were not so I would have told you." She had thought these words would go with her through the very grave and gate of death, but if they were only a man's words they may be a dream. She had no other ground of faith in immortality—only a hope is left. How can she help others to whom her own experience is all a morbid self-deception. Those chapters of John were all she had to show against their assertion that "all things continue as they were from the beginning," and that the Divine—the Spirit—has never broken through upon us. Is this one of the "outer bulwarks" from which we are to fall back upon the inner citadel of our faith? If so, how much poorer we are for the purposes of defence.

Mackennal replied:—

"9th August, 1892.

" . . . I must have greatly misrepresented myself if I gave you the impression that I don't think the fourth gospel written by John. I think it was. I don't see the slightest ground for doubting it except the goodness of the gospel, and it is easier to believe that the author of such a book was a faithful recorder than that he was a late speculator or mythologiser. What I think is that very likely John, when he groups Christ's sayings, gathers together sayings which may have dropped from the Lord's lips at different times and puts them in one connected discourse, and possibly in his report of argumentative discourses blends his own comment with Christ's words. But that the pregnant, authoritative utterances are Christ's, I have no doubt. Indeed, I regard the whole as Christ's teaching, only in the systematic part it is Jesus through John, as in the Pauline epistles we have Jesus through Paul.

" But I am really glad you spoke of this, for it sent me to John's gospel in the Greek again, to let it make its own

impression on me, and I have seen in the prologue and first chapter more than I ever saw before.

“ If the fourth gospel had been a great poem, no critic would have risked his reputation by saying ‘impossible for a fisherman to have been such a poet.’ We know that poets, much more saints, can become such by immediate inspiration, and if a man sees what John saw, he may well speak words deeper than all philosophy. . . .”

THE BETTER WAY.

In December Mrs. A. writes that she has been greatly helped lately by the practical discovery that for attaining to faith and trust in God, that which seems most difficult of achievement is really the more easy and effectual way. It is easier to rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory, to exult in all He is, to delight ourselves in Him, than to stop short at contentment and hard-won acquiescence. The other day a friend called when she was in much pain and weakness, who said “ Well, we are told to ‘joy in God,’ but resignation seems as far as we can get at these times.” She herself was at an opposite pole of feeling ; she was not struggling to subdue rebellion, but finding relief in thinking of God Himself, of what He is, and of how rich we are in Him, and so getting into a region away from the sick body and tired mind.

“ Is all this a platitude, an old axiom of the Christian life? Such things, though we assent a hundred times, only become ours when we learn them for ourselves.”

“ 20th December, 1892.

“ . . . Your second letter contained the best news I have ever had from you. When we have learned to say, ‘ Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar,’ we don’t stand in much need of each other’s help.

“ It is a wonderful thing, that perfect satisfaction in God. I have not for a long time felt resentment as I used to feel it, with the doctrine of ‘ imputed righteousness,’ nor distressed myself to find a theory of vicarious sacrifice, for I have felt that all God is He is for me, to

me, in me, and if men have mis-stated particular truths they have not exaggerated the central fact.

“Can’t you go a step further and take in the idea of God’s blessedness being for you—‘*The joy of the Lord is your strength.*’ Have you read a sermon of mine on that subject in the ‘*Life of Christian Consecration*’?

“Now for a little lecture, lest without some tartness this letter should cloy. I want you to learn to put those emotions of yours deliberately under restraint. I have to cultivate the joyous emotions and repress the sad ones to be fit for work, and the reward of that is ability to comfort others. Anyone can sigh, and many can sigh melodiously, and grieve their brethren with a fruitless tear. *Urania* has you in her teaching, give *Melpomene* the go-by. . . .”

THE KESWICK SCHOOL: FAITH HEALING.

In May, 1893, Mrs. A. wrote asking a series of questions rising out of a correspondence with a friend who belongs to the Keswick School. Her correspondent testifies to an experience of entire freedom from inward evil, a “cessation of civil war within, an annihilation of the evil nature,” phrases which Mrs. A. has never been able to use. Her correspondent says that this is because she is forgetting the death which must precede the new life. The “old man,” the “body of sin,” the evil nature must first be destroyed, and this God will do at once by an act of His Divine power if we have faith.

It is here that Mrs. A. wants to be helped to some clear thinking. Her mind refuses to form an image of this “old nature” which is to be in an instant slain. She has thought of sin as selfishness, egotism, and of the new life working by “the expulsive power of a new affection,” love curing and cleansing sin far back behind the roots of consciousness, casting out evil as the life-sap in the bud pushes the old leaf from the tree. But what is the old nature that is to be cast out? Her correspondent owns to temptations, not from within, but from without, coming, she says, from the devil. Mrs. A. does not know whether she believes in the existence of an external enemy of man; at least, she is sure that he is not responsible for her own pride, unbelief, impatience, cowardice, and the like. Her correspondent has also reproached her for the inconsistency of being ill—she ought to be

faith cured and be perfectly well in body. In reply she can only say that God has blessed her unspeakably in pain and weakness, she has put herself entirely in His hands that He may send to her what He thinks best, and she feels that she cannot fret much even about her own undeniable horridness when there is so much to rejoice in in God Himself, and the blue sky, and the whole breezy sunshiny world, and the children in it, and the garden, and the daily-hatching chicks.

“27th May, 1893.

“. . . Your friend’s personal experience has determined her doctrinal belief; her mistake is that she, like the rest of us, supposes that God’s way of dealing with her is His way of dealing with all, and that her interpretation of her experience is *the method of the gospel*. . . . The perfection of consistency is hers (*i.e.*, the perfection of being consistent; not the perfected growth to which consistency leads on). . . . What she has said to you is true as her own account of the change which passed upon her and the way in which it came about. I should not call her sinless—not that I charge her with sins—but I should say of her unhesitatingly, ‘*the peace of God which passeth all understanding is guarding her heart and mind*—her affectional and thinking being—in Christ Jesus.’ If she is unaware of struggle it is because her ‘strength is as the strength of ten,’ because her ‘heart is pure.’

“But, is that to be your experience? You have told me so frankly of your sins and failings that I need not hesitate to speak of you to yourself as one not perfect. But to compare you with your friend as more or less possessed by Christ’s spirit would seem to be almost an impiety. Your nature is much more complex than hers; and you are being saved in a much more protracted way. Her intellect is not subtle, yours is; she doesn’t know as much as you know, with intellectual knowledge, and so conclusions are direct and inevitable with her which you could never accept. Nor has her training been like

yours. If she had been brought under sceptical influences like you, she might have been a sceptic of an hour's conversion, and when she was restored to faith there wouldn't have remained with her any of the old truth of scepticism, nor the subtle associations leading to the old errors. You can pull up a fox-glove out of your garden and throw it over the wall and have done with it. But you can't get rid of 'equisetum' (horse-tail, is not it?) in the same manner. But Christ is visiting you with a salvation as full as that which she is experiencing. Your chickens, your garden, your sunshine give you a delight which such things would never give her; and Christ, who talked of chickens, and sunshine and flowers, is coming daily to you. You are quite right—it is Mrs. A. whom God wants for His daughter and servant and dear confidential friend to-day, to-morrow, and for ever. The old man is only Mrs. A. loving herself, seeking herself, considering herself more than God. And whenever she chooses, as she does, God and not herself, God comes in and makes her a heavenly Mrs. A. and not an earthly-minded one.

"So you will go on, and learn all that your friend can teach you; but *you* will be the learner, you cannot efface yourself. What should we do without you? an impersonal being would not be you. . . ."

Mrs. A. replies that reading over Dr. Mackennal's letters and her friend's, she has been thinking that the surrender of the will which is made the condition of the Divine gift must be a continuous thing. It cannot in its very nature be a stated transaction over and done with. There are, of course, occasions such as the missionary's surrender, when it seems possible to gather up one's all in a great handful and lay it at the feet of Christ. But for ordinary persons like herself it must mean something different. Of course, she is to give up her own will, the will to be selfish to-day, hasty to-morrow, faithless the day after. She hates these things. It is not her will that stands in the way; but channels are worn in the brain, habits are rooted deeper than consciousness. Is she to believe that God erases these

channels and breaks the chain of habits? She knows he could but does not think He would. It is not like His way. Greater to her mind is the miracle of patient love which invites her to dwell with Him while she is drinking in daily the water of Life—the Life of Christ—nourishing new impulses and turning the whole nature into new and right channels.

She looks up to these triumphant saints with reverence as they float easily up the mountain, all conflicts over; but her way is down below, paved with shame, humiliation, and discouragement, yet it does ascend; and there is nothing between her and the sky of God's great love and daily forgiveness.

Mackennal replies with a simple word of thanksgiving and congratulation. "What a blessing, in the knowledge you now have, that nothing—nor depth, nor height—can separate you from Him, or rather Him from you."

FAITH HEALING.

In March, 1894, Mrs. A. asks a series of interesting questions about faith-healing. Dr. Mackennal had asked her, if our Lord came into the room and offered her immediate cure what would she say. She answered that she would say, "You know best." Dr. Mackennal had thought that right, but was it? When our Lord asked the blind man, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee," the blind man replied, "Lord that I may receive my sight." And he obtained the boon. She has been unable for weeks to take any food without suffering, and she is willing to bear this peacefully if she knows that it is God's will. But a faith-healing book she has been reading declares that it is not God's will; sickness is from Satan, and if she will pray for health and then rise up and declare she is cured, whether she feels so or not, she will be well again. If this were true it would be enough to upset the balance of her reason. Can it be God's way to grant such a boon to an unnatural frame of mind. Yet if it is His will to heal why does He not do it?

Mackennal's reply is:—

"10th March, 1894.

"Your own reason, I am sure, has already suggested the answer I am going to give you; that your perplexity is only a personal form of the old bewilderment—how to reconcile infinite goodness and infinite power with the

actual conditions of life. I am not surprised that you sometimes break down ; but you have chosen the way of faith, as it has commended itself to your judgment as well as your heart ; and if there are times when the pressure seems overwhelming, you must just bear it, and wait for better days. I can't say to you, it is God's will that you should suffer ; but I am sure of this—that God accepts your compliance with the hardness of your lot as filial service ; and I am also sure of this that the spiritual consolations He has vouchsafed you and will vouchsafe, are such as to make even what you endure seem but a light affliction enduring for a moment.

“ The power of prayer is not a power I should limit very curiously, even by application of ‘ cause and effect,’ for faith takes us into a region behind causes ; but for you to unlearn all that God has been teaching you about patience and submission, and adopt the insistent type of piety would be not only, as you say, impossible, it would be a fall.

“ Many years ago, Mr. C. was full of ‘ faith-healing,’ and would allow no play to any other consideration. I said to him, ‘ Why, then, do saints die ? ’ He made a very wise and godly reply. ‘ You surely wouldn't deny us the privilege of dying.’ To which my answer was—‘ There are some who choose to live in everything in that frame of spirit.’ I might have said—‘ You surely wouldn't deny us the privilege of living so.’ You have chosen that way of living and believing ! and if the price is sometimes very heavy, an expensive offering is appropriate when there is such a relationship as is between us and our God.

“ I am sure you know all this, and will feel what I have written. If I could lift some part of your burden, I would ; as it is I can only pray for you, and call to you—faint not.”

Mrs. A. replied full of gratitude for this letter. Certainly if Satan sends sickness God can turn it into a school-book for us; but her friend, the faith-healer would say that God is no Juggernaut to accept offerings of mere endurance. He is the Healer, the Good Physician, and can say in a breath, *thy sins are forgiven, and "thy faith hath healed thee."* No doubt He can, but that does not seem His chosen way now, whatever it may have been in the gospel days. Yet her mind turns back lovingly to the gospel stories of healing. They are so perfectly natural, they must be true. She recalls no instance where Christ refused to heal for reasons of discipline; He only refuses where faith is lacking, and that weighs with her more than any modern arguments.

But for herself it would be a horrible hypocrisy to ask for cure, and struggle for faith in order to cultivate a conviction that she was well. She must keep to the plain road of cause and effect. She does not limit the power of prayer to what one can see of cause and effect, but in her practical life she must be content to use such means as give temporary relief. Sometimes she resolves to think less of the body, to ignore it, to throw herself over into the spiritual sphere, and live away from symptoms and sensations. But before long, obstinate and painful experience brings her back to the old drudgery of watching dieting, and nursing self. The saintly invalids in memoirs all have some one to do this for them. She has to accept it as appointed for her. Nothing is too hard when we are sure it is God's will. What made her restless was the fear that she was refusing some divine offer, and that Christ might be saying, "*O ye of little faith.*" Yet if we were wholly His should we not be well?

Mackennal, in reply, 12th March, 1894, sends a note from Mrs. A.'s friend, the faith-healer, apologising for inability to attend a meeting owing to illness! "*Your sense of humour,*" he says, "*will help you as a medicine.*" The letter continues:—

"... Are not people who go in for faith-healing and such things, mostly those whose sense of will is in advance of their reflective faculties? and contrariwise those who are simply oppressed by such doctrines, are they not persons who make more of character than of will, and reverence more the forces that slowly upbuild character than those which make sudden revolutions in character? And, perhaps, we need the check of one another.

“Do you think Paul was a faith-healer when he wrote as he did about Epaphroditus, and gave his advice to Timothy? James seems to have been so, *but* he confined his belief to the powers of the leaders of the church. Take an excursion into the New Testament with a view to finding out how all these things are linked together, and forgetting that they have any special application to you; note, too, how in our Lord’s life, with all the abundance of bodily healing, there is such a reserve in the direction of spiritual pathology, and that among us, the reverse is the case. I think that here, too, the merry heart will be with you, doing you good like a medicine, and the deeper heart underlying the merry one will be fed.”

In July, 1894, Mackennal replies to some questions about work which Mrs. A. has undertaken, and continues:—

THE EVOLUTION OF WILL.

“. . . Have you read Drummond’s new book ‘The Ascent of Man’? I send you notes of a paper I read at our literary club this winter, before Drummond’s book appeared. I wish some sage person would take up the ‘evolution of will.’ I think that along these lines something might be made of it:—

- “(a) Motion, *i.e.*, individual motion.
- “(b) Self-motion, *i.e.*, not mere attraction from without, but appeal to appetite within;—action according to impulse.
- “(c) Self-determination, *i.e.*, comparison and balancing of impulses, not merely according to immediate gratification, but also according to foreseen results.
- “(d) Sense of approval or condemnation in view of choices made.
- “(e) Discovery that these choices issue in higher or lower possibilities. The Unknown Power of the scientific

man—the God of the pious, communicating Himself more or less as our self-determinations make it possible to receive Him.

“It would be a noble revenge, if the doctrine of evolution, so much reviled by the theologian and novelist, could establish the fact that, from the beginning of life, there was an original activity within the individual which was the foundation for the highest ethical development.”

Mrs. A. replies that she is in the midst of Drummond, but is helplessly confused by the books she has been reading—Drummond’s “Ascent of Man,” Dallinger’s criticisms of it, Liddon’s “Life of Pusey,” and an article of A. J. Balfour’s on “Naturalism and Ethics.” She seems to see Drummond smiling at Pusey as at a child playing with toys; Dallinger laughing at Drummond, Balfour scornfully regarding them both. Do the angels smile at *his* antics?

LOVE AND EVOLUTION.

“17th November, 1894.

“. . . I am not surprised that you write so strongly about Dallinger’s letters. I, too, have been painfully impressed with their tone. I don’t think Drummond has answered, or will answer—it is not his habit. Drummond is a preacher, not a controversialist. I daresay he would acknowledge his to be a highly impassioned treatment of his subject, and that is accounted for by his purpose.

“Did you see Frank Crossley’s paper in the *British Weekly*? That, too, was characteristic, but I believe it was profoundly true. He believes that love, in its own nature, must be supreme.

“In love, if love be love, if love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne’er be equal powers.”

“Vivien may make a bad use of the doctrine, but Merlin wouldn’t have been taken in by it if it wasn’t true.

And Mr. Crossley boldly says, love is here, and if God is not love, He will have to resign. Of course, this is not demonstrated truth, but how true it is.

"It seems to me that we have a ground-work laid in nature for morality, and morality is in its final utterance, love. Not benevolence, but love. I am inclined to think that everywhere where life is there is will, and where will is there is possibility of going wrong. That there are terrible sufferings in the natural world is very true; they are so terrible that it is cruel to exaggerate them, to overlook alleviations, to speak as if they were the conspicuous feature in the evolution. The progress is the conspicuous feature, the sufferings are in the method. I grant there is no direct comfort in that thought, but it is consistent with faith—it ministers to faith, and in faith is consolation.

"Where, I think, you and I differ from Dallinger is here. He takes us into the gospel region as into another world, and to Christ as reversing the conception of nature. We believe that Christ is the revealer. We are content to see in the world the traces of method, order, purpose, which stamp so sacred and abiding a character upon goodness in every form, love, and fidelity and self-control and truthfulness and self-devotion. To see good evolving out of evil is a great comfort; to see that it is the good which perpetually evolves, that the evil is accidental and in the use, not in the purpose.

"I have great sympathy with all who repudiate the domination of sentiment in this region, and ask for fact and reasoning. But pessimism is as much a development of sentimentalism as optimism, and is no more true. Indeed, optimism is substantially true, although from want of knowledge of all the facts and their issues, we have never had a correct statement of it. . . ."

THE ATONEMENT.

In January, 1895, Mrs. A.'s mind was perplexed by an article in the *British Weekly*, on Dr. Denney's book, presumably "Studies in Theology." She quotes the words, "The world in virtue of its sin lies under the condemnation of God. His wrath abides upon it. The obstacle to reconciliation is not man's distrust of God, but God's condemnation of man. Christ puts the condemnation away by taking it upon Himself. He bears sin by submitting to that death in which God's condemnation of sin is expressed. What it means is the old word 'substitution.' Can this be preached? It is the essential truth of the gospel. Without it there is no gospel."

If that is so she does not know where she is. She thought there was a gospel of divine love and purity, revealed in a real Christ, of sin forgiven, of new life begun, of cleansing, strengthening, saving grace. She can earnestly use the words, "We are heartily sorry for these, our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous, the burden of them is intolerable to us." The sense of sin is real to her, but she finds in the fact that God has offered to us cleansing and regeneration a pledge that the past shall not be allowed to ruin us.

Where in the gospel is there room for this idea of a transferred punishment, a substitution or propitiation? Who is to be propitiated? A century ago men said "God," now they say "ethical law," or "abstract justice," or something which demands so much suffering for so much sin, and tyrannises over God Himself, driving Him to provide Himself a lamb for the sacrifice. This is less repulsive than the old view, but has no verisimilitude, no touch with reality to her. She cannot find it in the gospels. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep, and takes it up. His whole life is a sacrifice of love; that is real, but not the other. She has read Dale and McLeod Campbell and loves them, but what they say does not seem to her to make sense in any honest English way. She has been told to wait and think, but surely if this is an important part of the faith it must be possible to put it into plain words suitable even for her capacity.

Two days later she adds a postscript, fearing that she has left out the positive side of her faith. She does understand the phrases which express our oneness with Christ—His identification of Himself with us. He gave Himself to us, and all that He is, is ours to rejoice in. The Lord is her righteousness. If that is mysticism, she can't help it. It is a very necessary reality to her. She believes that He tasted death for every man, but surely the theologians have confused natural mortality and the unknown future penalties of sin. They say Christ

died that we may not die. But we do die. The eternal death, the death of sin, He did not die.

To these letters, Mackennal replies :—

“9th February, 1895.

“Your letters were very interesting to me, as any earnest talk about the Atonement is. I think you may rest easy about your orthodoxy. I mean by orthodoxy something respectable, the desire, namely, to find all of true spiritual worth which other people are finding, and the desire to be at one with them. One wishes always to be sure that one has not really lost anything which Christ came to give; and, to use the old-fashioned words that are full of meaning, we don’t want to get away from the foot of the Cross. It is very much to cultivate that sense of reliance upon all Christ has done, as well as on all He is doing, so that we can lean the weight of our unworthiness on Him, as well as seek inspiration from Him. But this you have; and if you have it in a form which satisfies, at least approximately, your intelligence, thank God, and tell Him what you have, and don’t trouble about the Doctors of Divinity.

“I think I understand the anxiety which Dale and Denney and Robertson Nicoll are feeling. They are afraid lest persons should build on their experience of benefit—moral and spiritual—derived from Christ, instead of on what Christ has actually done, and so be exposed to all the uncertainties of a ‘righteousness of their own.’ But, I think, they don’t sufficiently distinguish between the images—verbal—or symbols—intellectual—in which they apprehend the ‘objective’ value of the Atonement, and that objective value itself.

“I should like to put this question to them—is the value of a dose of medicine objective or subjective? I should say, objective, resulting from the qualities in the

medicine itself. But it is equally clear that its merit to me is subjective, and on Berkeleyan principles, it would be easy to show that it wouldn't be medicine except for a subject taking it.

"I think you've seen a volume issued several years ago, 'A Symposium on the Atonement,' published by Nisbet. I wrote for that symposium a paper, and I tried to point out that while, on a certain plane, there is a doctrine of substitution, Christ standing in our room, and a doctrine of imputation, we coming into Christ's place, when we get on to a higher plane and contemplate Christ as the living Head of Redeemed humanity, substitution and imputation both become merged into identification, *solidarité*. And then, the words substitution and imputation, which we always used with reserve, because of their false suggestions, we are glad to see disappear. We don't want them any more, though we gladly recognise, more fully than ever, that Christ was made sin for us, and that we are made the righteousness of God in Him.

"I wonder if all this is beside the mark to you. I am sure you go along with me in it all; though I am not sure it touches on any difficulty you are feeling. Though I rather suspect you have not been really troubled by the *British Weekly* on Dr. Denney; only moved to utterance by your sense of something both more reasonable and more spiritual than the words you quoted; and perhaps reflecting that such language may doom other souls to go through the struggles which cost some of us so much years ago. . . ."

In November, Mackennal concluded a letter with a remark which continues the prolonged correspondence on Christian perfection.

"8th November, 1895.

" . . . I wish you had been with us last Sunday morning. I ventured to preach on 'Ye shall be holy, as I am holy,'

and making a passing reference to the question of 'perfection,' which I exceedingly dislike to discuss, I put the following question for the consideration of the people—'if we could become directly conscious of the divine life within us, would it not be a consciousness of perfection?' I daresay it may be a familiar thought to you; but while I dared to utter it, I was overwhelmed with the immensity, the sacredness, of the questions it opened up. But does not this account at once for the fact that persons whom we respect should talk of perfection at all, and for their only being able, if they are wise, to speak thus now and then. The poet has his visions only at times; why should we expect the saint to have his always or else deny them to him wholly?

"Are you still interested in this question, on which, you remember, you helped to start me? To Mr. and Mrs. Crossley and to you, who made me take it seriously up, I ought never to cease to be grateful."

Mrs. A. states her difficulty with such precision and force as to make condensation, except by the omission of a few words, impossible.

"9th November, 1895.

"... I wonder whether I understand you. When you speak of our possibly becoming 'conscious of the divine life within us' do you mean in the sense of identifying ourselves wholly with that life, the new consciousness extinguishing or overpowering that of the other self, weak, faulty, bound by sinful habit, capable at any moment of flaring up in pride, in temper, in low mixtures of selfish motive. Could such a substitution of consciousness be true? Would it be a glorious vision, a splendid temporary 'justification by faith,' or only a most dangerous and unholy delusion, sure to be followed by deep reaction of disappointment and despair? We can be conscious of Christ's life in us, and (not only convinced, but) directly conscious of its holiness (His Holiness) to our joy, but speaking for myself I can never count that my 'perfection' (hateful word!) until that Life wholly possesses me, which it certainly does not yet. I remember speaking of this to George MacDonald twenty or thirty years ago,

and he said, 'I am not saved, I am only being saved ; I shall never be saved until I will all God's will, love with His love, and hate with His hate.' I suppose you will say, 'A branch of the true Vine may be temporarily conscious of so willing and loving.' Well, yes, *very* temporarily ! I have friends far better than I am, further on and higher up—more, far more, devoted and consecrated, yet that their faults are not entirely subjugated is plain to be seen. If they *felt* perfect it would be a delusion, and I think, a very harmful one. If we know that Christ rules in us and that the unconquered tracts are so deeply against our will and desire, is it not every way better and healthier to let all our joy and confidence be in Him, and to be 'heartily sorry for these our misdoings,' and honestly bent on extending His dominion ? But I speak for myself and my fellow-sinners, and do not at all wish to deny that there may be those in whom the old selfish life is *dead*, those who are wholly new creatures in Him. Blessed beyond words are they ! . . . "

" 15th November, 1895.

" . . . I have to go out in ten minutes to a funeral, so I have only time to glance at what you say in your longer letter, in reply to my phrase about the direct consciousness of the Divine. Is it, do you think, impossible that God should give such an immediate impression of Himself in union with us that, differing from our self-consciousness should nevertheless be in character, directness, convincingness, more like consciousness than any other form of knowledge—a consciousness of pardon and acceptance for instance ; a consciousness of conversion ; and if of these, why not of the power that is sanctifying as well as of the process of sanctification ? And is not this a reasonable expectation from the doctrine of the Holy Ghost ? If such a consciousness were, it would be a consciousness of the Perfect, not our self-perfection, but of the power working in us.

" I have been reading the *British Weekly* notice of Rendel Harris's new book. I have been wondering if both the Perfectionists and the Anti-perfectionists do not

fall into the same error of recognising no possible consciousness but the *self*-consciousness."

THE SACRAMENTS.

In the only letter written in 1897 Mrs. A. asks if Dr. Mackennal has read "Lux Mundi." She has been reading the life of Romanes, and finding Dean Paget's name mentioned there, she turned to his essay in "Lux Mundi." It is very attractive to people with troublesome bodies, and she likes the allusions to Wordsworth. Her attitude to all "High Churchism" is strongly *Protestant*, and yet she can't help asking, Is there more in the idea of the Sacrament than she has been taught to find? Was it *that* our Lord meant in John vi. 51—58? Do we miss by ignoring it some more real salvation of the bodily life which might be ours? Yet she does not like their limiting the grace of God to special rites and times. How did the Quaker saints come into being if salvation is in sacraments? And yet she keeps wondering, "May there be something in it after all?"

"9th August, 1897.

"It is one advantage, among many, of August in Bowdon, that a man has time to think of his friends, and now at last I can write you.

"First, let me thank you for 'Lancelot Andrewes.' I have been reading, using the book since you left it with me, and I have not quite finished it. I will return it in about ten days. It is very interesting and touching; and I can quite believe that it may be very helpful at times. Indeed, I have found it so. But I should be afraid of making it too much of a companion. I fear I should grow impatient with the man who, with such a flame of spiritual passion in him, spends so much effort in trying to feed it instead of making it turn the engine. I should not venture on such a comment if I thought it would mar your pleasure in the book. Andrewes, at his best, is what Dr. Whyte says of him, and we ought very thankfully to use everything we find in folk that can make us better, and help us to love them.

"I wonder if you have answered your question put to
A.M.

me several months ago about the Lord's Supper. I have reproached myself for not answering that at once, because I really had something to say. I have found the sacramental something in the Lord's Supper, and I believe you would find it too. But I also think you should take the second element of our communion—itself a sacramental something—as well as the first. I mean the social element. '*The bread which we break is the body of Christ*'; '*We, being many, are one body and one bread.*' I believe these are two truths, and not, as so many Christians say, only one truth, and that the second.

"The grace of Christ's human nature is imputed to us not only by our conscious faith and effort, but also by His own act transcending our faith and preceding it; and therefore something is needed for the expression of spiritual life beyond singing and praying and preaching, in all which the thought of the Christian is concerned. And if the Lord's Supper be a fitting expression of the fact that our true life is sustained by the virtue of its source in ways transcending the consciousness of the recipient, it is not hard for us to recognise that that expression may have been chosen by Christ as a most appropriate way, among others, of communicating the gift. And so Christians in general seem to have found.

"This is a hard, intellectual way of putting the matter; but 'the matter' can stand it. It is itself so rich in generous, transcendent, mystic experiences. And no one need fear making a superstitious use of a service which so many have found blessed beyond understanding, if there be points on which a rational judgment can lay hold.

"But I am also sure that the check on abuses, not of a superstitious so much as of a subjective order, of the sacramental use of the Lord's Supper lies in its being observed as a social, not an individual, act. . . ."

CHAPTER XIV

THE SECRETARYSHIP OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION

*“Ah, God ! for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
For ever and ever by!”*—TENNYSON.

IN December, 1890, the secretaryship of the Congregational Union fell vacant by the death of Dr. Hannay. The importance attached by Congregationalists to the post is best explained by recalling the manner of man who had filled it. Dr. Hannay had come into the secretaryship at a time when English Congregationalists were utterly unaccustomed to organised co-operation in church affairs. The churches were under the spell of an extreme individualism, which sometimes alarmed even those who believed so profoundly in individualism as R. W. Dale. Dr. Hannay's task had been to represent the common life of the churches, to express their consciousness of common traditions and aims, and to induce them to co-operate to prevent their piecemeal extinction ; and to do this without injuring their sensitive susceptibilities or hurting their proper pride in independence and self-support. He had thrown into the task the energies of a fine nature, instincts of statesmanship, and the patience and firmness of a Christian gentleman. Under his management the Union had attained a representative character, and a reputation for enlisting the services of men of distinction, which made it one of the most influential religious organisations in England. It stood first among church assemblies for the boldness with which it handled, and the brilliance

with which it discussed, public questions of importance. When Dr. Hannay's death left the secretaryship vacant it was felt that it was no easy task to fill an office which carried with it great influence, but not very clearly defined duties, and a distinction which had belonged rather to the man who filled the office than to the office alone.

Dr. Mackennal's success as secretary of the International Council, and his general eminence as a leader, marked him out as the man most likely to bring to the secretaryship the kind of distinguished service which it required. In December, 1890, Dr. Mackennal had written to Mrs. A. :—

“ . . . Your letter came when I was very much troubled. I was suffering from the death of a dear friend, Dr. Hannay, and from the necessity of taking part in his funeral. Then came a public suggestion, and many private intimations, that I was the man to take his place ; to leave Bowdon, that is, and preaching and pastoral work, and go to London to be secretary of the Congregational Union. It was too much for me, the excess of confidence and affection which was meeting me on every hand, and I was not fit to attend to your letter.

“ I may mention—for you will like to know my judgment in the matter—that if I should be asked to London, which seems not absolutely likely, I have seen nothing to shake my conviction that pastoral service is my work. . . . ”

When the Committee of the Union met, these suggestions took definite shape, and in April the Committee declared its intention of nominating Dr. Mackennal for the office of secretary at the annual meeting in May. As soon as this news reached Bowdon the deacons called the church together, and urgent and unanimous resolutions were passed pressing the claims of the church on his continued service. The resolution of the church and congregation set forth that—

“ In view of the expressed intention of the Committee of the Congregational Union to propose the appointment of Dr. Mackennal

as secretary of the Union, this meeting of the Bowdon Downs Church and congregation desires to express the great concern with which it has heard the announcement, and to record its continued attachment to Dr. Mackennal, and its unabated appreciation of the value of his services as the minister and pastor of this church.

“While acknowledging the right of Dr. Mackennal to be left free to follow the course which, after full consideration, may appear to him to be the line of duty, this meeting would respectfully express the opinion that the true sphere of Dr. Mackennal’s greatest usefulness is in the pulpit rather than at the secretary’s desk, and more particularly that at his age the quiet labour of the study and the kindly task of pastoral visitation cannot, with advantage either to himself or to the church at large, be exchanged for the anxieties and vexations of the committee room.

“This meeting would urge Dr. Mackennal to consider the claims upon him of the Bowdon Church after a pastorate of fourteen years, during which he has not been hindered from giving large and important service to the denomination, service which, we trust, should Dr. Mackennal continue among us, would still be rendered so long as he has strength and inclination for it. We also ask him to remember the various undertakings of the church, many of them initiated by himself and still in need of a fostering and guiding hand, as well as the public beneficent institutions of the town and neighbourhood to which he has given needed and valued help. Nor should he forget that the office of the pastor’s wife, now filled with such grace and large acceptance by dear Mrs. Mackennal, will no longer be open to the wife of the secretary.

“In conclusion, this meeting prays that Dr. Mackennal may be guided by the Holy Spirit to such a decision as shall be for the glory of God and the edification of His Church.”

The young people wrote:—

“The mere possibility of your leaving Bowdon has led us, ‘the young people’ of your congregation, to give some expression to our feelings.

“It would be a real sorrow to us, for not only should we lose one whom we regard as a friend, but one whose influence and help we appreciate most highly. Although we took no vocal part in the meeting last Sunday, we heartily supported the resolution then passed.

“May we be allowed to suggest that, should you accept the office

of secretary to the Union, your opportunities for influencing young people would be comparatively few? We, therefore, very earnestly hope you will see your way to remain with us."

The prompt and cordial action of the church led Dr. Mackennal to feel that his duty was to remain with the people to whom he was bound by ties of genuine affection. He wrote to Mr. Haworth:—

“ BOWDON, 29th April, 1891.

“ Although I shall acknowledge on Sunday morning next, from the pulpit, the resolution of last Sunday morning, I ought to write you a line thanking you for your promptitude and kindness in sending it me.

“ I may add, too, that the receipt of the resolution has been of service to me; it has distinctly lightened the burdensomeness of my care. I really did not need such a resolution to convince me that my wife and I, as well as our children, live in the affections of the people, but the assertion on their part that it is so and the other statements of the resolution were very welcome.”

“ MEMORIAL HALL, 12th May, 1891.

“ The newspapers have doubtless informed you by this time that the Congregational Union has postponed the election of a secretary until the autumnal meetings.

“ I am heartily glad that I am thus at liberty to follow the impulse of my affection as well as the dictate of my judgment, and announce that it is not my intention to break my pastoral relation to the Bowdon church.

“ It has been a severe strain to me to keep my mind open to receive any representations which might be made that my service would be required elsewhere. I cannot protract that effort; nor have I the right to keep the church in suspense as to what our future may be. The work we are doing together can only be done by those on whom there is resting no suspicion that their present co-operation is only a temporary one. Both pastor and people need the sense of fixity to do their best.

“ The resolution presented by the church and Sunday-school and the letters sent by the deacons and the young people deserve a fuller answer than these few lines; and that answer shall be forthcoming after my return. In the meantime, there is no need to keep

this letter secret. You may read it, if you think well, to the congregation to-morrow evening."

His reply to the church was as follows:—

DEAR FRIENDS,

"The kindly conceived and generously worded resolution passed by you on Sunday, 26th April, deserves a fuller acknowledgement than the announcement, already communicated to you by our senior deacon, that it is my intention to remain at Bowdon, and not to allow the question of my being nominated as secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales to be again raised.

"Although I never concealed my conviction that the pastorate is a fitter sphere of Christian service for me than a secretariat could be, it gave me great satisfaction to know that you were of the same opinion. Your resolution enabled me to await the future with a composure which otherwise would have been sorely tried, and I thank you for it with all my heart. I recognise, too, the delicacy with which, while expressing your affection and confidence, you forbore unduly to press your wishes upon me. I welcome your affirmation of your desire that I should still continue to serve the churches of our order, as opportunity may be given to me, assured that our work at home will not suffer by our cherishing broad sympathies with those churches and all the people of God.

"It gave me special pleasure to read your reference to the influence exercised among you by my wife. I have long known how much of your pastor's efficiency has been due to her sympathy and co-operation, which year by year have been fuller and more precious, and I am gladder than I can express that you have recorded your sense of her worth.

"Your memorial was accompanied by a letter from the deacons, a resolution from the officers, teachers, and many of the senior scholars of the Sunday-school, and a letter signed by about a hundred of the young people of the church and congregation, which breathed the same affection and trust. I should like to say here how grateful all these words were to me, and how heartily I reciprocate them.

"Opportunities of renewing the expression of confidence between a pastor and his people very seldom occur in the course of a ministry. When they do occur, they should be made occasions of renewed consecration to the Lord of the Church and to His service. It is my purpose and prayer, as I am sure it is yours, that our work in Bowdon and elsewhere shall be more faithful, more generous,

because you have called me once more to the pastorate among you, and I have again accepted your call."

To Miss M. O. Goult, who had written for the young people, he replied in similar terms, adding the words:—

"Not only has the Congregational Union, as you remind me, no young people: no other young people are so dear to me as those who sent me that letter."

When the Union Committee received his reply in the negative, the matter was suspended for the summer months till the autumnal assembly of the Union at Southport. At the Southport meetings no other name could be brought forward, and it was still thought possible that a unanimous invitation from the Assembly might induce Mackennal to accept the secretaryship. It was therefore with no ordinary sense of relief that the Assembly discovered at the autumnal meetings in Southport in 1891 that it was of one mind. The meetings were marked by a mood of deeper spiritual feeling, by unusual manifestations of the spirit of prayer, and by a unity and elevation which seemed to bear witness to the presence in the churches of the Holy Spirit. With remarkable unanimity and with unmistakable evidences of satisfaction Mackennal was invited to become secretary of the Union, and a deputation appointed to urge his acceptance of this call.

The deputation met Dr. Mackennal and the deacons of the Downs Church in one of the rooms of the Manchester and County Bank in King Street, Manchester. It is said that in the discussion which took place the deacons proved themselves masters of the situation. It was a time of severe trial to Dr. Mackennal as well as to the congregation. Much hung on the decision of a few hours, and when a parting of the ways is sharply marked whichever way is chosen, the decision commonly leaves behind a hazy

troop of "ifs," surmises as to whether the issue might not in certain circumstances have been otherwise, and speculations as to whether this and that would have happened if the decision had been otherwise. But Dr. Mackennal himself was fully persuaded in his own mind when he sent his final decision that his tastes and abilities were likely to be of more service in the pastorate of a church than in the secretaryship of the Union. He lacked altogether the "low dexterity" for managing affairs (the phrase is Browning's), and he used to say that not even his wife knew how much he detested business details. He recognised that much of what was best in his own life had come to him through his share in a spiritual fellowship, and that to be deprived even partially of such fellowship would be a serious loss. Congregationalism has indeed no position or emoluments to offer its bishops of a kind to compensate for the sacrifice of a happy pastorate; and only the combination of a strong sense of public duty and a sense of manifest providential destination for such a post would have made it possible for Mackennal to leave work in a church for which he was obviously well fitted. The sense of public duty was not wanting, but the conviction that he was destined for this post was absent; he doubted whether he had the qualifications for secretarial work with which he was credited. The later services in connection with the Free Church Council proved that he had the nobler qualities of a distinguished secretary, and there is little doubt that had he accepted the offer the recent history of Congregationalism would have been written in a bolder and more heroic strain. But the consciousness of vocation is itself part of the vocation, and that was absent in Mackennal's case; and he was too independent in the essential structure of his mind to let his brethren judge for him. "There must be," he wrote later, "the clearest call

of duty to non-pastoral service before a minister trained under Congregational influences would hold himself justified in leaving a pastorate. The Congregational Union, the Congregational denomination, is not a church ; and to serve a church is still regarded among us as the most august form of service. A Congregational minister without a church is apt to think of himself as being like Prospero when he broke his rod.

*“Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have's mine own,
Which is most faint.”*

It may be of some interest to mention that as recently as 1902 he reaffirmed to the present writer his conviction that in refusing the secretaryship he had been rightly guided.

The incident closed with the following letter to Dr. Rogers as chairman of the Union Committee :—

“ BOWDON, 31st October, 1891.

“ In sending to you, as chairman of committee, my answer to the invitation of the Congregational Union that I should become their secretary, I am glad that I am writing a friend with whom I have lived in intimate affection for more than twenty-five years. My answer will be unwelcome to the Committee and the Union ; and it is a comfort to me to think that it will be communicated to them by one who can understand both what I may say and what I may fail to say in this letter. It is with a pain which I cannot utter, but which I am sure you will sympathise with, that I tell you I cannot respond to the call. I recognise its great urgency. The affection and enthusiasm displayed in it, and the singular impressiveness of the manner in which it was given, have been a burden to me ever since it was uttered. Under no circumstances would it have been easy to say ‘No’ to such a request from brethren whom I honour so deeply, representing churches which I love so well ; and the fact that many of them regard the decision as arrived at in answer to earnest prayer adds a solemnity to my action of which I am sensitively conscious. I could have yielded anything to such a request except my own judgment, deliberately and conscientiously arrived at.

'The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.' It is part of the obligation God lays on a man in holding him responsible for his action that he must act according to his own judgment ; no light vouchsafed to my brethren can serve me instead of the light which has been vouchsafed to me. For one thing I am profoundly grateful —the exceeding gravity of the call set me free from self-consideration in deciding on it. Personal reluctance to think of the secretariat was swept away by the force of the Assembly's deliverance, and I was left to face the simple question of duty. It is because, as clearly as I ever saw any issue in my life, I see it to be my duty not to ask my people to loose me from the obligations I have contracted to them that I am compelled to decline this request. The church at Bowdon is in the midst of plans, already originated and waiting to be carried out, for its reorganisation. The determination to give me an assistant, the enlargement of school and mission buildings, and the election of deaconesses are portions of a scheme by which we hope to discharge the duties of a suburban church both to the neighbouring city and the rural district around us, and so to prove that Congregationalism can meet some of the crying needs of our time. I have been long urging my people to such work ; the prayer and patience and consecrated purpose of many of them have been preparing for what they are now ready to undertake. To leave them suddenly at such a crisis to carry out their purpose without my help, to leave them discouraged and unled, with the possibility that some of the young people, not understanding how the pledge I gave six months ago to remain with them could be withdrawn unredeemed, might drop altogether the work they are contemplating, is a responsibility I dare not face. I can hardly hope that my brethren in the Congregational Union will feel the force of the call to me to remain where I am as I feel it ; but I do ask them to accept this as my sole reason for declining their call. I should like to add that at no time while the question of the secretariat has been under discussion do I think it would have been possible for me to attach less weight to these considerations. The knowledge that no newly appointed pastor could at once take up the work has been the reason of my reluctance from the beginning to allow any suggestion of leaving my people to be presented to me. Of the affection and confidence lavished on me by my brethren, far beyond anything I could have looked for or deserved, and of my gratitude to them, I cannot trust myself to speak. To seem to repel their trust is the greatest trial I have ever known. To have been the object of such trust will be, when God in His goodness shall bring the Union through its present difficulties, the greatest honour of my life. Will my brethren bear with me when I

add that I shall not cease to pray that God will direct them in their perplexity, and that I hope I may be permitted to serve the churches still in any humble work which a pastor among fellow-pastors may do?

“I remain, my dear Rogers,

“Yours affectionately,

“ALEXANDER MACKENNAL.”

CHAPTER XV

THE REUNION OF THE CHURCHES AND FREE CHURCH FEDERATION

*“Forward! Let the stormy moment fly and mingle with the past;
I, that loathed, have come to love him: love will conquer
at the last.”—TENNYSON.*

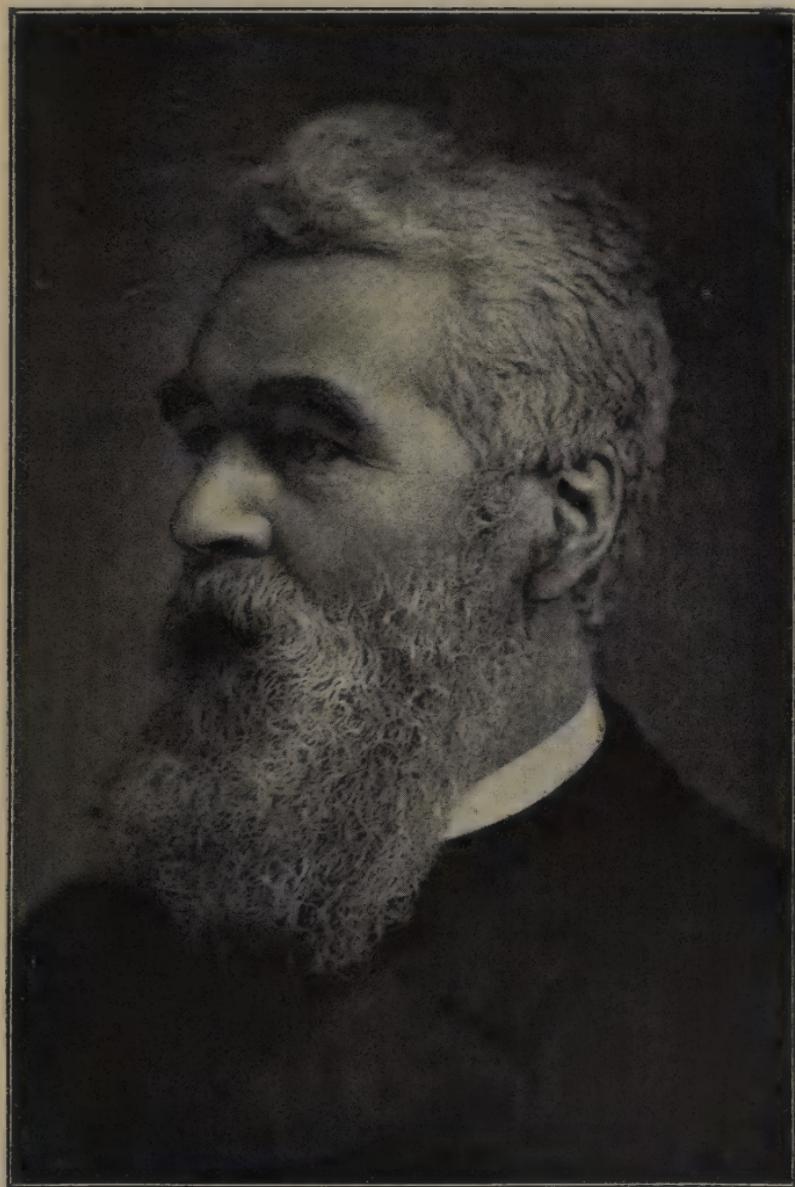
THOSE who have followed the development of Dr. Mac kennal's mind up to this point will be prepared for the part he played in the movement which led to the formation of what is now known as the Free Church Council. In 1891, 1892, and 1893 a group of clergymen and of others interested in promoting the co-operation of Christian churches with a view to their ultimate reunion met, under the auspices of Dr. Lunn, in Switzerland, first at Grindelwald and later at Lucerne. The conference was nicknamed by *The Times* an “ecclesiastical picnic,” but neither its records nor its results justify the witticism. The discussions were serious contributions to the question of Christian reunion; they were carried on by responsible men representing both the Established and the Free Churches of England; there was no shirking of questions of principle, no neglect of the deep roots in history of the present divisions of the Church of Christ; and when the question of reunion becomes again a vital one, as it must do sooner or later—for it must ever remain a matter of serious concern to every disciple of Christ so long as he continues to read the seventeenth chapter of John—the ground covered in these discussions will have

to be retraversed. They represent a genuine expression of the unity of the Christian consciousness, and of the longing of Christian magnanimity to find some way of bridging the “echoing straits between us thrown.”

In the discussions which took place Congregationalism could not have had a better representative than Dr. Mackennal. His accurate and thorough acquaintance with the religious history of England, his intimate knowledge of the Elizabethan controversies, his scholarly study of first principles in the New Testament, his conscientious adherence to the spiritual principle for which the exiled Separatists suffered, his catholic mind, broad human sympathies, and dignified presence not only secured the ear of those who came to scoff: they made men feel that here they were in the presence of a man of God whose mind moved freely among the great things, and whose word was weighted with the thought of years.

Some of his contributions to the discussions indicate that, though he went into the reunion movement with earnestness and conviction, he did so without any illusions as to its immediate result. Here is an extract from the official record :—

“ Dr. Mackennal said he did not like compromise, for he thought the whole of church history showed how fatal that policy had been. Compromise usually meant the passing on to another generation the solution of questions too difficult for us to deal with. Referring to the actual working out of the proposed reunion, the Doctor said he did not wish to unite with Wesleyans, Presbyterians, or Episcopalians shorn of that which was valued in their sight; he desired to understand their point of view, and value it. He would not then stay to explain what he considered the special benefits of Congregationalism, but he wished strongly that, in addition to being a Congregationalist, he could have the backbone of the Presbyterians, the fervour of the Methodists, and the sense of historic continuity which belonged to the Episcopalians; and, in addition to all these, he desired that which was the glory of the Church of Rome, where it existed in purity—a sense of one Holy Apostolic Church. Now



DR. MACKENNAL (IN MIDDLE LIFE).

if the churches were to come together in a spirit of compromise, and were each to cast off part of that which had moulded and fashioned their religious life, then they would be but a poor set of people to be associated with. He therefore looked, not so much to their putting off this or that in order to diminish the points of objection, as to their each and all growing into a larger apprehension of that in each church which each church valued in itself. He most heartily concurred in Mr. Hughes' point that the churches' common ground was Jesus Christ. That was perfectly true, and the larger their knowledge of Christ, and the fuller their religious experience, and the richer in doctrine, as well as in ethics, any church communion was, the more valuable it would be as an interpreter and exalter of Jesus Christ.

"But he would state plainly in what direction he was looking for the accomplishment of church union. He looked for it in the direction which had been talked about a good deal, namely, in the enlargement of the power of appreciating one another's position. As this was done they would also enlarge their power of appreciating what was good in one another. The bigger men they were, the nearer they would be to union; no union would ever be got by paring down one another or oneself. Let them be great, big men, with hearts large enough to take in in sympathy the great variety of intellectual statements, and as they did so they would find themselves insensibly coming closer together, and that which interfered with their real fellowship would rapidly dissolve away. But one of the worst things they could do was to arouse and stimulate internal divisions in any denomination in the interests of union.

"They must take care that when they spoke men did not make ready for battle, and if they did make ready for battle it must not be taken for granted that all the blame rested with those who so prepared. He heartily believed their reunion work to be of God, and they must work at it, and wait for God's time patiently, taking care not to protract His time by unbelief, or want of hopefulness, or want of courage in themselves."

Lecturing on the Reformation, he described, as he could do so well, the differences between the Puritans and the Separatists, and led up to this conclusion:—

"I want to point out to you the wonderful perception and foresight of these men, how wonderfully in thus formulating their idea of a Christian church they were guided to apprehend what is essential, and how clearly they perceived where in the future of

English ecclesiastical history the real trouble would be. They forecasted the intrusion into the Church of what we now call the Erastian doctrine. They saw that out of the doctrine of the supremacy of the canon law, enforced by royal decree, would grow that spirit of Erastianism against which all the minds of English Churchmen are now in violent revolt, and which for two hundred years has made the history of Presbyterianism in Scotland—which, because of its identity in doctrine and discipline, might have been a model of peacefulness to all the world—a series of perpetual confusions, troubles, and obstructions to the nation. That was a point in their contention, and the object of their affirmation of the sufficiency of these communities of spiritual men to be self-governed in this sense, not self-willed, but able for themselves to understand and to interpret the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“What do we see to-day? We see that Separatism has become—I mean in its fundamental essential doctrine of the Church—perhaps the most formative and most constructive church doctrine in England of to-day. Presbyterians have accepted it, and those Methodist communities which sprang out of the evangelical revival of the eighteenth century have accepted it. They were compelled to accept the toleration given to them by the Act of 1689, and in doing so they took their position as tolerated religious communities instead of being comprehended within the National Church. They have exercised to the full that liberty of self-government, that power to interpret for themselves the will of the living Head and King of the Church, which was laid down in the passages which I have already read to you; and, indeed, one may ask how we can conceive that the right to agitate for still further reforms would have existed in the National Church itself, if it had not been for the existence outside, of those free communities generating national opinion in favour of the religious members of the community having freedom to legislate and carry out reforms for themselves.

“But there is another point in the Separatist contention which I should like to put before you, and which is not so generally and clearly comprehended. It is its essential catholicity. I will give you a test by which you may always know a true, old-fashioned, constitutional Congregationalist. If you hear a man speak of ‘the Independent Church’ you may be sure he is not a pattern Congregationalist; he has come from some other community: and although, for convenience’ sake, we tolerate such expressions as ‘Presbyterian Church’ and ‘Methodist Church,’ we do not like them. The formula which is preserved amongst us is ‘the Church of Christ of the Congregational Order,’ ‘the Church of Christ

of the Presbyterian Order,' 'the Church of Christ of the Methodist Order,' and so on. And I think you will immediately see that the care which is taken in this old-fashioned habit to guard the term church from any association with denominational peculiarities, from any association with names drawn from incidental connections with persons, or from peculiarities of method, is a real assertion of the catholicity of spirit which it possesses."

In his reply to criticisms and questions on the lecture, he said :—

"He was very much struck two years ago by a remark made to him by Dr. Briggs, of New York : 'All the churches in the present day are in a state of schism.' To be called a schismatic and to be compelled to recognise oneself as one was a rather startling thing ; but he (Dr. Mackennal) had since come to accept that position, and to recognise that, by no fault of their own, they had been born into a state of schism. And because all the churches were in a state of division, neither one of them was the true representative of the divine idea of a church. In the effort after something better it was possible that the views of a great many of them would change, both with respect to Protestantism and Romanism, Establishment and Disestablishment, Congregationalism, Presbyterianism and Episcopacy. Granted that they were in that state of schism, and that they wanted to flow together into one community, which should organise itself according to the freely moving Spirit of God within it, it would be something very much unlike anything that existed at present, and something that should gather into itself everything that was valuable in the position of every one of them."

There was a prolonged debate introduced by the Rev. J. Harford-Battersby on the Lambeth Articles of Reunion. The Bishops had proposed to consider any proposals for reunion based on the following four proposals :—

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary to salvation, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith ;
2. The Apostles' Creed as the Baptismal symbol and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of Christian faith ;

3. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ—Baptism and the Supper of our Lord, administered with unfailing use of the words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him; and
4. The historic episcopate locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.

Dr. Mackennal was urged to make a distinct reply to the advances made by the Bishops in connection with the Lambeth Conference; and after a very generous speech by the Rev. Hay (now Canon) Aitken, he said that:—

“ He had been struck with the marvellous spirit of generosity and of self-abnegation which characterised the various articles. The first three were really surprising, and constituted a model eirenical affirmation, coming from any church whatsoever; but coming from a body of Bishops, whose peculiar character had been already described, those acknowledgments deserved their frankest and warmest approval.

“ But when they came to the fourth affirmation, the very fact that it was the fourth affirmation following upon three—the first of which concerned the Bible, the second the Creeds, and the third Christian Sacraments—the article concerning the historic episcopate was exalted into a position of prominent importance which by no means appeared in the particular affirmation which was made in the article itself. That was to say, a matter which was subordinate to Bible, to Creed, and to Sacrament, was made, by the position it occupied, co-ordinate with them; and that was a position to which he thought Nonconformists would never assent.

“ He had been reminded very strikingly during the progress of Mr. Aitken’s address of the old Puritan debate in the Savoy Conference of Protestants. The question was put to the Puritan Nonconformists; ‘ You say it is a matter of non-conscience to you the wearing of vestments, or even the acknowledgment of the episcopate itself. Why then, do you make so strenuous an objection to it?’ The Puritan reply was: ‘ It is not a matter of conscience in itself, but the position to which you are exalting it makes it a matter of conscience with us.’ If it were a question between the Congregationalists of America and the Methodist Episcopal Church, he did

not see anything in that article to which he could object. But they could not forget the men who made the affirmations in considering the force of the affirmations themselves ; and though it was perfectly true that to the larger number of the clergy that affirmation concerning the historic episcopate did not carry with it the idea of Apostolical succession, he thought they would be strangely blind if they did not recognise the fact that the article itself had been put into the position in which it appeared, in order to conserve the doctrine of Apostolic succession for those to whom the doctrine was dear. ('They don't say so.') No, but they could not overlook the fact that the doctrine in recent years had gained enormous influence in the Church of England, and that the Evangelical clergy, to a very large extent indeed, had accepted it. There were some growths of so exuberant a character that, if they allowed any portion of the original organism to remain, would grow and spread like the briar-rose. They must have noticed how intensely vital this matter of the historic episcopate was in Mr. Aitken's assumption, and how, therefore, they were compelled not to disregard the enormous importance which Churchmen attached to it."

This corresponds with the stand made by the Nonconformists of 1662 for catholicity as it is stated in John Howe's argument—that to introduce additional and non-essential terms of communion as a *sine quâ non* of Christian fellowship destroys the catholicity of the Church and makes it a sect :—“ though such additions were in the matter of them lawful, yet the making them additional terms of Christian communion must be highly sinful, as being the introduction of a new Christianity, Christian communion being of Christians as such.”

Although the Grindelwald Conferences could not in themselves be more than personal exchanges of opinion, they left some important results behind. They created an atmosphere of interest in the reunion problem ; they brought out the real unity of the Christian consciousness ; they stimulated the longing for more catholic fellowship, and they made it clear that any immediate steps towards reunion must leave Anglicans out of account. It was

evident that the external link of Establishment held together men who were in no other sense in fellowship with one another, holding different conceptions of the church, and different ideals of the Christian life; but excluding Anglicans as being not yet ready for reunion, there was evidently a large common basis for a movement towards union in the Free Churches.

The Grindelwald Reunion Conferences had an organ in the press, which, though it lived only for two or three years, did its work better than some organs with a longer history. The *Review of the Churches* had as general editor Dr. Henry Lunn, and Archdeacon Farrar, Dr. Clifford, Mr. Percy Bunting and Dr. Mackennal, as joint denominational editors. The Congregational notes for the two years of Mackennal's editorship are very unlike ordinary religious journalism. They reflect the depth and breadth of his interests—one note discussing the need of a revival of constructive theological thinking, and the next the progress of evangelical religion in Canada or Australia. The magazine had perhaps not enough popular "journalese" to survive for many years, but it ventilated the subjects discussed at Grindelwald, and it prepared the way for the Free Church Federation movement.

That Free Church Federation was becoming possible had been a cherished conviction of Dr. Mackennal's for many years. The present writer once heard him say that as long ago as the Surbiton days he had preached a sermon advocating the federation of the non-Episcopal churches on the basis of their fundamental agreement as to the nature of the Christian Church, and in matters of faith.

Early in 1892 there was an unofficial meeting of persons interested in this movement in Mr. Percy Bunting's house. It was there proposed to hold a public congress at which the whole question might be discussed, and the congress

was forthwith arranged to be held in Manchester in November, Mackennal undertaking to make the needful arrangements, and to prepare a programme.

When the congress met in Manchester in 1892, Mackennal with characteristic care for root principles, arranged that the first meeting should be devoted to discussions concerning "The Church," "The Ministry," "The Sacraments," and "The Fellowship." It was found that on these questions there was not only substantial agreement, but real unanimity; and many who had hesitated about the prospects of the new movement recognised at once that there was a substantial basis for co-operation. The Manchester Congress was followed by a congress at Leeds, and shortly afterwards a development took place which has determined the subsequent character of the Federation movement. Dr. Mackennal had desired to make a Free Church Federation which would be constituted by the governing councils of the various Free Churches. It was to be a kind of imperial ecclesiastical parliament constituted by the authoritative representatives of each denomination. But another basis for the Federation was supplied by a movement which had taken place in Bradford, and had there been associated with the organising energy of the Rev. Thomas Law. The Bradford churches had adopted the plan advocated originally by Dr. Chalmers, of dividing the town into parochial districts for the purpose of thorough visitation. Each church had had a district assigned to it, and had been requested to make a thorough canvass of the inhabitants in the interest of the kingdom of God. The co-operation of the churches in this spirit of Evangelistic and social effort suggested the idea of local councils composed of representatives of the Free Churches in each town or district. It was seen that by basing the Federation on these councils, and enabling each local

council to send its representatives to the annual meetings of the Federation it would secure access to a constituency wider, more democratic, and more free from hampering traditions than the existing denominational authorities.

At Birmingham Dr. Mackennal moved the adoption of a constitution which he had himself drawn up on these lines, and every year since that time has added its testimony to the value of the work thus done. The Federation has continued to grow; local councils have been added year by year; it has taken up important branches of Christian work, and its annual meetings have become great Free Church parliaments.

From 1888 to 1894 the problem of reunion was much in Dr. Mackennal's mind, and his correspondence on the subject, part of which is preserved, was considerable. There was an interesting three-cornered correspondence between the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Temple), Mr. Philip Vernon Smith, the Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester, and Dr. Mackennal. There is an article on the subject by Dr. Mackennal written in 1894 for the *United Presbyterian Magazine*, then edited by his friend Dr. Corbett. The article gives a *résumé* of the whole question from Dr. Mackennal's point of view, covers the transition from the home reunion movement to the Federation of the Free Churches, deals with the relations between the two, and shows that Mackennal in accepting what seemed the best possible course for the time did not give up the larger and nobler ideal which had attracted him in the first instance. His article traces the rise and progress among Englishmen of the consciousness of the church as a divine society—one, holy, catholic and apostolic:—

“ Briefly it may be said—and with the measure of truth which belongs to broad statements—the English Churchman, in the first

part of this century, regarded the church as a national institution ; the English Nonconformist regarded it as a voluntary association ; and in the struggle between these conflicting conceptions, the august idea of the church, as a divine society, transcending and moulding both national life and the individual will, was obscured."

Then came the Oxford movement, and among Nonconformists a corresponding study of first principles, and the glad discovery that their conception had not merely a more intense spirituality but also a grander catholicity than was asserted by the Anglicans ; that it contemplated a unity, a sanctity, a catholicity and an apostolicity, historically more real, and ideally more far-reaching than had ever been asserted in the proudest claims of Rome. Out of the re-awakened perception of the church as a divine society came a quickened sense of the unity and catholicity of the church. In the Anglican Church this took the form of a movement for the "reunion of Christendom."

"For some time there was nothing among the Dissenters corresponding to the 'reunion of Christendom' movement in the Established Church. But this did not mean a more rigid mutual exclusiveness in the Nonconformists ; it meant, indeed, the reverse. They were actually enjoying many of the blessings which churchmen were looking forward to as the fruits of corporate reunion. They were habitually co-operating, not in social and educational matters only, but in the highest religious acts and services. Ministers of the different denominations were welcome in each other's pulpits ; and should a minister change his denomination, no period of silence nor re-ordination was imposed upon him. Members were continually passing from one communion to another, and their letters of commendation were as frankly recognised by a sister denomination as by their own. There was a formula current thirty years ago, moreover, which tended to keep back efforts after reunion among Nonconforming churches. 'The unity of the church,' it was said, 'is spiritual, invisible—all the denominations do really make up one church, to whose fulness of truth and service each denomination brings its own contribution ; the unity of the church is in Christ, actually existent

under all diversity ; it is a unity which man can neither make nor mar.' So that both the practical experience of these churches, and their lofty idealism, kept them back from making efforts after organic reunion.

" But it is the nature of all ideals to strive to get themselves realised. It might have been foreseen that the children of men who profoundly apprehended the essential unity of the church would ask themselves, ' Why, then, these apparently endless divisions ? ' The unity in diversity we can recognise, but unity in separation is a very different thing. No thoughtful student of the New Testament, and observer of the Christian life in England and America, can believe that the merely invisible unity of the afore-mentioned formula is a fulfilment of the Saviour's prayer in the seventeenth chapter of John. Substantial identity under varying forms is infinitely better than uniformity of appearance concealing divergence of faith. But is there nothing better than either one of these supposed alternatives ? The existence of the denominations has not destroyed the unity of the church ; what if the perception of the unity of the church should abolish the separate denominations ? That is the process of thought through which evangelical Nonconformists have been rapidly passing ; and side by side with it has been a growing desire to bring all the spiritual forces of the various churches to bear upon the national life unitedly, instead of sectionally ; to employ them ' co-operatively,' in the language of the day, and not ' competitively. '

" Perhaps no one had any suspicion how broadly and how deeply such thoughts were working in men's minds until the *Review of the Churches* was founded, and the conferences at Grindelwald and Lucerne were held. The movement for the reunion of Christendom, it is not unfair to say, awakened no popular enthusiasm ; it is to-day almost forgotten by the public in the interest felt in this new movement, not yet three years old. It is not my intention to undervalue the older movement : the impulse prompting it was genuine ; and there are many men—of scholarly habit, to whom history is dearer than adventure—who will devote themselves to it with a patience and loyalty, only the more commendable because it has not laid hold of the imagination of the people. But it is a true instinct, which leads men to say, ' A reunited England is our first concern ; heal the religious divisions at home, and then you may hope to heal those of Christendom. '

" The term 'reunion of the churches' is as characteristic of Nonconformity as the term 'reunion of Christendom' is of Anglicanism. It sets broadly out what Anglicanism ignores or denies, that there are several religious communities in the land, each of

which is as truly inspired of Christ, and inhabited by His Spirit, as any one of the others. It takes as its own starting point what we may hope Anglicans will at length recognise, that there is no Christian society in England entitled to call itself 'The Church' to the exclusion of all beside. And perhaps along this line the way to the 'reunion of Christendom' may lie. Assuredly that would not be a reunited Christendom from which the non-episcopal churches should be shut out, or into which they could only be admitted by denial of their history. But in efforts to draw into one fellowship communities closely allied and accustomed to co-operate, partial and tentative as such efforts must be, there may come a patient and hopeful spirit, skilled in the overcoming of difficulties, and in evoking the temper which habitually subordinates smaller to larger ends; and to such a spirit may be revealed the way in which the 'reunion of Christendom' is to be accomplished. . . .

"The Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops in 1888 . . . 'gladly and thankfully' recognised 'the real religious work' carried on 'by Christian bodies not of our communion'; and added, that 'it was not insensible to the strong ties, the rooted convictions, which attach them to their present position.' Short of acknowledging such bodies as churches, the paragraph from which these clauses are quoted says everything that could be desired. The letter in which the Archbishop forwarded the resolutions to the heads of the leading Nonconformist bodies in England, though very guarded—he seemed expressly to avoid a direct invitation to the Nonconformist bodies to come into conference—was personally gracious and full of Christian cordiality.

"Mr. Vernon Smith has dealt with the answers sent from the Congregational Union, the Baptist Union, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, and the Presbyterian Synod. Each of these replies contains something characteristic of the denomination sending it; but they all treat the clause concerning the historic episcopate, as barring the way. They are at one in understanding the historic episcopate, referred to in the resolutions, to mean the diocesan episcopate; and they agree in the affirmation that this is not primitive and apostolic. The archbishop has tacitly allowed this understanding of theirs to pass; that is to say, he has taken no steps to correct it as a misunderstanding; he has rather accepted the fundamental difference on this point between them and the Lambeth Conference as at present closing the question.

"Mr. Vernon Smith, writing to his brother churchmen, recognises the significance of this agreement on the part of the four denominations, whose replies were written without any consultation one with

another; he sees that the suggestion for conference could not be entertained by the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Wesleyans, and the Presbyterians, so long as they thought that the historic episcopate was one of the articles which were to 'form the basis of the brotherly conference,' and which were to be 'accepted before the conference met.' But he looks on them as mistaken in their interpretation of the Lambeth document. 'It would,' he says, 'have been open to any of the Nonconformist bodies to formulate a counter proposition; and both parties might then have entered into conference, to compare their proposals and ascertain how far the two were capable of being blended with one another, or how far either would admit of modification, with a view to mutual agreement being arrived at.' The statement, however, that the four articles were 'laid down' 'as a basis on which approach may be, by God's blessing, made towards home reunion' — which Mr. Vernon Smith treats as a misconception on the part of the Nonconformists—occurs more than once in the Lambeth encyclical letter. Moreover, it appears in the report of the committee appointed to consider the question, under circumstances which attach special emphasis to it. The report says: 'It appeared to the committee that the subject divided itself naturally into two parts: first, the basis on which the united church might, in the future, safely rest; secondly, the conditions under which present negotiations for reunion, in view of existing circumstances, could be carried on.' 'With regard to the first portion of the subject,' continues Mr. Smith, 'they submitted, "as supplying the basis on which approach might be, under God's blessing, made towards reunion," the now famous four articles, which were afterwards embodied in the eleventh resolution of the conference.' The change of phrase from 'the basis on which the united church might in the future safely rest,' to 'the basis on which approach might be, under God's blessing, made towards reunion,' is very significant. It seems to point out that no approach towards discussion of reunion was possible until the historic episcopate was accepted. It would have been a breach of faith to enter into conference on a given basis with the tacit intention of changing the basis. When Mr. Vernon Smith raised this point at Lucerne, I replied at once, that if he could secure, from some recognised authority of the Church of England, a declaration that the Nonconformists were wrong in thinking that they had to accept the historic episcopate as a preliminary to conference, the whole position would be changed. It was, perhaps, a bold declaration to make; but much talk with leading Nonconformists has confirmed me in my belief that, even now, conference would not be impossible.

if this article might be regarded as open to discussion and amendment.

“Mr. Vernon Smith, while distinguishing between the importance attached by the Presbyterians to ‘the outward and organic unity of the church’ and what he thinks is the indifference to it of the other three denominations, goes on—‘It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the real explanation of the tone of the replies of all the four great Nonconformist bodies lies in the absence of any desire, or rather in the existence of the reverse of a desire, for corporate reunion.’ I should put the case very differently. The four denominations, with all their variations of doctrinal and practical habit, are united in regarding each other as branches of the one church. There has gradually grown up among them a constant intercommunion in ministry, in worship, in sacramental observance, and in the reception of members into each other’s communities, which proclaims them of one fellowship, though not identified in organisation—many churches, but one Church. They have but to enlarge the practice of intercommunion, to consult and co-operate with each other in the formation and sustenance of new congregations, and the amalgamation of some which already exist, in carrying on their home and foreign missions, as well as in their social and educational work, and the dividing walls between them will thin out. They will, in many instances, be found to have reunited; to have furnished the model according to which an entire corporate reunion may proceed. The real difference between the Nonconformists and Evangelicals like Mr. Vernon Smith, is not as to the value of reunion, but as to how it may be secured. Let us become one organised body, say they, and then we may combine all our religious activities for the good of the nation. Nay, reply the Nonconformists, let us combine our religious activities; then, if we find a single and identical organisation a help to piety and to carrying on God’s work, we shall be in the most advantageous position for constructing it.

“There are differences of opinion among English Nonconformists on the two points—is corporate reunion of the churches a possible, or even a desirable thing? If the discussion on the historic episcopate were out of the way, other questions would straightway emerge. The Presbyterian answer to the Archbishop’s letter, for instance, while affirming unreserved adhesion to the Nicene Creed, spoke of hesitation in accepting this as ‘the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.’ ‘Had it been proposed to negotiate with the ‘doctrinal articles’ of the thirty-nine as a basis, we (like our forefathers in earlier times) would have recognised in them a body of

doctrine common to us with our Anglican brethren, on the basis of which we might approach each other with good hope of agreement.' But the Presbyterians would not be likely to affirm that a church constituted on this basis was 'the Church of England,' in such a sense as to unchurch and denationalise Christians who did not accept them. The Congregationalists and Baptists would not assume a name which declared that the Society of Friends, who repudiate the use of the 'elements' in the two sacraments, was not a church. Nor, although they recognise that the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity effectually prevents ecclesiastical union between the Unitarians and Evangelical believers, would they consent to the employment of a term which denied the name church to communities like that of Drs. Martineau and Drummond; they would rather encourage the use of the name, in the hope that with the name there would be a growing approximation in the faith which underlies it.

"In two matters there is a substantial agreement among the Evangelical Free Churches: first, that the time has come to contend strenuously against the multiplication of separate denominations, and even to seek the union of several of them; and, next, that the way to secure such union is not to begin by formulating a basis, but to act together, and let the ultimate formulas express the facts of fellowship."

[The article then refers to the resolution of the International Congregational Council already given (p. 170), and to the work of the Free Church Congress.]

"The practical result of the home reunion discussions which have been so rife of late is that the Free Churches are federating in different parts of England. What may come of it no one can tell. But if federation succeeds, it will certainly work toward reunion, and the name will probably follow the reality. Two spiritual forces are constraining to this united action; the sense of a common duty to England, and the feeling of a common life derived and sustained from Christ. There are many who regret that it is impossible to include the Church of England in the Federation, but the last word has not been spoken between that community and the Free Churches. When the practical disestablishment question is settled, and the academic discussion of the historic episcopate has ceased to be an attraction, a federated Free Church of England may invite the Bishops to conference, or may have addressed to it an invitation which can be accepted, and the day for considering home reunion will have dawned."

No one could have foreseen when these words were written that within a few years an act of political chicanery on the part of ecclesiastical politicians would shatter the fair hope of home reunion, dissipate the growing good feeling between the Established and Free Churches, break up the beginnings of co-operation in social and religious work which had been silently but steadily growing throughout the country, turn the Free Church Federation into a militant organisation compelled to encourage passive resistance to an enacted law, and put back, by at least twenty-five years, the hands of the clock which were slowly, very slowly, climbing towards union. But when the question becomes actual again a generation hence, those who have to handle it will discover how faithfully Dr. Mackennal discerned its essentials—Disestablishment first, as the restoration of liberty to the Church of Christ in England, to be followed by reunion of those who accept the Divine Lordship of Christ, His Headship over the Church, and His right to determine the character and govern the policy of the Church of which He is Head, according to the needs of each succeeding age.

In one letter from the correspondence with Mr. P. V. Smith Dr. Mackennal asserts the claim—which ought always to be made when this matter is under discussion—that the whole history of British Christianity down to the Reformation, its heroes, its books, and its buildings, is the common property of Conformists and Nonconformists alike:—

“15th September, 1893.

“Your letter of the 13th has reached me safely, and I accept your enclosure as a faithful account of what passed at the Lucerne Conference, and consent to its being laid before the Archbishop of Canterbury.

“I have only to add, in reference to clause (b) in the second page, that if ‘the historic continuity of the united Church with the

present Anglican communion be raised for discussion, the Nonconformists would probably also claim that their churches are also in historic continuity, not with the present Anglican communion, but with the ancient Christianity of England. I have not asked that your letter should be altered to admit this claim, because I did not raise it in the single sentence in which I made a friendly reply to your conciliatory speech in the conference, but I should like it laid before the Archbishop, and perhaps the simplest way of doing this would be to send His Grace a copy of this letter."

Dr. Mackennal served the Free Church Federation as secretary for six years. During the greater part of that time he bore a large share of the organising work, though such work was never congenial, and was done at considerable cost to himself. In questions of policy and principle his voice was frequently the determining one; he was constantly supported by Dr. Berry, whose views nearly coincided with his own, and who brought to bear a power of advocacy which Mackennal lacked or shrank from using. Mackennal was present at the meetings held at Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham, London, and Bristol as honorary secretary; at Liverpool he was president; at Sheffield he preached the first sermon to the council; at Cardiff, Bradford and Brighton he took a share in the work of the meetings. Almost his last journey was to Newcastle-on-Tyne to attend the Federation meetings there, and thence he returned, having taken a chill which he found himself unable to throw off. When the meetings met in Manchester for the second time the assembly had to perform the melancholy duty of recording its gratitude for services which belonged to a closed chapter in its history.

During these years his influence in the council of the Federation was consistently sagacious, wholesome, sympathetic, and positive as a progressive factor. He secured Mr. Evan Spicer as chairman of the finance committee of

the National Council, and interested many others in its work. Sometimes he would rise to speak when all the speaking had been on one side, and beginning with an audience wholly out of sympathy, would end by winning their adhesion for his own larger view or more patient policy. The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, whose impassioned temperament was the antithesis of Dr. Mackennal's, said of him: "The selection of Dr. Mackennal as secretary did more than can be expressed to secure the ultimate success of the movement. His wisdom and tact, patience and industry, have been invaluable."

When the committee of the Federation had under discussion the action, if any, to be taken in the matter of the King's coronation oath, Dr. Mackennal was not able to be present. The Federation had been urged to protest against any modification of the clauses in the oath repudiating Roman Catholic doctrines—clauses, of course, particularly offensive to Roman Catholics. Mackennal discusses the proposal in the following letter:—

"2nd October, 1901.

"... I think it is quite right that the throne should be kept strictly in a Protestant succession; that this should be affirmed on all proper occasions, and secured by the vigilance and resolution of the people.

"I am doubtful, very doubtful, of the value of declarations or oaths of any kind to secure political ends, but I should not protest against the modification of an offensive into a less offensive declaration.

"But I should strongly oppose our doing anything to renew and reinforce a repudiation of any other doctrines than those which directly affect the full acceptance of the entire independence of the Papal court of this realm by the Monarch.

"To say 'the nation is in danger from the Papacy—the central doctrine of the Papal church is transubstantiation—or any other purely theological doctrine, therefore we must secure repudiation of this,' is to act on the doctrine of constructive treason which we have always protested against.

"If the Congregationalists could accept any such position, their

ground for protesting against the hanging of Barrowe, Greenwood and Penry is gone from under them.

"If the question comes up in this form in discussion, I should like the committee to know what the old historical Congregationalists would have said about it ; and I believe that some of the warmest friends of the Free Church Council will not shrink from a public declaration of their position if the occasion should arise."

When the Education Bill became an Act, and Free Churchmen found themselves forced into the dilemma of becoming either active participants in an education system which they regarded as false in its basis and radically immoral in its relation to the State, or of becoming passive resisters to the law of the land, Dr. Mackennal threw the weight of his influence into the scale against any attempt by the Federation to "organise conscience." He opposed the Act, but did not like the self-consciousness evoked by the movement for resistance. "It seems to me that for a saintly person to dwell upon the political value of his fortitude of conscience and his suffering, is as fatal to religious simplicity as for a beautiful woman to dwell upon the possible money value, or social value, of her beauty, would be to her modesty." "It is harder for me to stand aside from men with whom I have everything in common and have always worked, than it would be to let the bailiff into my house." "If people do not see these things as I see them, I do not judge them ; I even sympathise with their fidelity to conscience." His action, advice and correspondence are throughout characteristic. They reveal the habit of probing a course of action to the heart by processes of thought, the wealth of "points of view" which sometimes puzzled his friends and interfered with his own decisiveness of speech and action ; and perhaps also that undervaluation of action in a world which is made by acts rather than thoughts, and the noble error of

imputing to others readiness to give to thoughts and arguments and principles the same weight which he himself attached to them.

The following letter from Dr. Monro Gibson, who was Mackennal's colleague in committee, and his successor in the honorary secretaryship of the National Council, conveys the impression of his influence which other colleagues have described :—

"25th May, 1905.

" . . . Dr. Mackennal's influence in our councils was a moderating one. Some of our members were excitable, and, in the view of some of us, disposed sometimes to be rash. Such men are, of course, needed for driving power, but a regulating influence has its value too. Dr. Mackennal was as decided as anyone in his opinions, and as uncompromising in his advocacy of them, but he was always able to look at both sides of a question, and if there were many sides to it, to take an all-round view. . . .

" This breadth of view and readiness to see a subject in different lights did not, of course, contribute to the energy with which he would advocate a debatable question, but it eminently qualified him for his position as secretary, and appeared to full advantage in the resolutions he would draw up on difficult and delicate subjects. He would come to the council meeting with half-a-dozen such resolutions all ready, and these would be so well balanced and touch so deftly all the sides of the question that they would very often be accepted without amendment. The practice now in regard to such resolutions is to entrust them to select committees. In his time he was a select committee of one, to prepare them all.

" I need not tell you how delightful it was to be associated in work with one who was so considerate of his fellow-workers, and such a perfect Christian gentleman. I shall always think of him as one of God's nobility, both in nature and in grace."

The memorial resolution of the Federation at the meeting in Manchester in March, 1905, was proposed by Mr. Percy Bunting, seconded by Dr. A. Rowland, and passed by the great meeting silently standing :—

" The council desire to put upon record their deep and grateful sense of the services rendered to the Free Churches and to the cause

of religion by the late Dr. Mackennal. He was one of the most convinced and strenuous promoters of the Free Church Council movement ; he organised its first congress in Manchester ; he served as its honorary secretary for six years with unflagging zeal and industry, and afterwards as its president. His cautious judgment was always a safeguard against mistakes, while it was ever inspired by lofty ideals. The council are fully conscious that their work is lasting and will survive its workmen. They must expect losses. But they feel deeply the fall of so many of their founders—Dr. Berry, Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, and Dr. Mackennal, into whose labours they have entered, and whose memory they cherish in devout thankfulness to God."

CHAPTER XVI

AN APOSTLE OF PEACE

*“Fanatic named and fool, yet well content,
So he could be the nearer to God’s heart,
And feel its solemn pulses sending blood
Through all the widespread veins of endless good.”*

LOWELL.

“It is as great presumption to send our passions on God’s errands as it is to palliate them with God’s name.”—PENN.

AN interesting chapter in Mackennal’s life is connected with his advocacy of peace principles. Although he did not identify himself with the Quaker principle that war in all circumstances is sinful, he was led early in his ministry to recognise that in any actual circumstances likely to occur in English history, it was the duty of the ministers of the Prince of Peace to make their influence felt in seeking a peaceful solution of international complications. His advocacy was sane, reasoned, weighty and Christian, and even when he stated his own conviction he made it clear that he had weighed what could be said on the other side.

Among his letters is one from Mr. Henry Richard referring to a speech which Mackennal had made at the annual meeting of the Peace Society in 1869 :—

“PEACE SOCIETY, 10th August, 1869.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Some of our friends were very much struck with the speech you delivered at our annual meeting, and are anxious, if possible, to secure your help in the advocacy of principles which you understand

so thoroughly, and can explain so well. I was, therefore, instructed at our last committee to ask you if you would kindly prepare a lecture for us, to be delivered in such time and place, or such times and places, as may be hereafter determined. . . .

“This is not the time for lecturing, but somewhere towards the autumn or winter will be better, should you feel inclined to entertain the suggestion.

“Yours very truly,

“HENRY RICHARD.”

In all the public controversies of his lifetime in England, and in later years in America, Mackennal made his influence felt on the side of peace.

To men of such convictions, the South African war was not only a time of severe testing, it became also a profound and sorely-wounding grief. To those who watched its effect on Dr. Mackennal, it was evident that as the war went on, and the blood-thirst of the nation was fed by the insanities of most of its newspapers, the misery and burden of it all was ageing him and breaking his spirit. He certainly did not recover his natural buoyancy again.

The attitude of mind in which he approached the question, and the reasons which lay behind his views, gave special weight to his action. His remarkable pronouncement to the Free Church Council at Sheffield, in 1900, while the war fever was at its highest, had a ring which attracted the attention even of those who had taken a different view of the South African war. It is worth while to follow his action through the crisis.

In September, 1899, he delivered an address on the “Christian attitude toward war in the light of recent history” to the Second International Congregational Council at Boston. As war between England and the Transvaal was not declared till the following month, the address was not written under the pressure of political feeling, though war had been declared when it was

published in an American journal as an article. It contains a striking analysis of the currents of feeling which produced and were produced by the war, and reads like the utterance of a New Testament prophet.

It is too long to quote in full, but its burden may be gathered from the following summary and extracts. It begins by recalling the delightful visions of peace with which the second half of the nineteenth century began, and their inevitable disappointment. But he thinks it would be wrong to say that the story of the wars of the century has been wholly wanton. Craft, falsehood, and mean terror brought about the Franco-German war, but the Crimean war came out of a generous impulse. The friends of Christian peace make no greater mistake than when they belittle and misrepresent the generous motives, misguided it may be, and erroneous, but sincere and deep, which sometimes hurry free peoples into war. During the contest between the Northern and Southern States of America, not only did the Lancashire operatives show most pathetically that their sympathies were with one side in the struggle; what was still more significant, those distinguished advocates of peace, Richard Cobden, John Bright, and Henry Richard, were for the most part silent until the conflict was over. They could not approve the battles, but they could not be indifferent to the cause. We must be reasonable in our judgment of a people's action, and in our remembrances of the oppression which makes a wise man mad.

"Indeed, one of the severest condemnations of war, as a method, emerges when we have frankly acknowledged the generous motives out of which it sometimes comes. War squanders and degrades the noble impulse which gave it being. If the impulse could go at once to its object, as when a father boxes a troublesome boy's ears, or a passer-by knocks down a scoundrel who is insulting a woman, there might be some justification for militarism in a civilised community.

But this is just what never happens. Months and years intervene between the honest indignation and the declaration of war, and a still longer period drags on until the end of the fighting. Not many persons can bear the strain of a noble purpose, again and again thwarted, its fulfilment indefinitely, hopelessly delayed. History tells us that the martyrs can ; it also tells us that the soldier cannot, the politician cannot, the people in public meeting cannot. We have seen the process of deterioration more than once. The nation is sincerely enthusiastic, but the conduct of the war passes into the hands of men with whom war is a profession ; and it gives opportunity to the unscrupulous speculator to make his gain. As the months go on, there is great searching of heart among Christians ; with those who are not Christian, the generous impulse becomes an ignoble necessity of finishing what has been begun. Then, as the opposition is prolonged, the determination is come to use any and every means to put down the enemy ; something like malignant temper may appear where the original motive was so good. If there is a marked inequality between the combatants, or if one side has soundly beaten the other, the conquerors do not stop with righting the original wrong, they aim at punishing the beaten party. The cry '*Vae victis*' has a pagan sound. Have we altered the fact when we talk of 'indemnity'? If the nations are fairly matched, both are weary of the struggle long before it is ended ; terms are proposed and accepted far less satisfactory to either than could have been arrived at without fighting ; but there is no grace in the proposal or the acceptance, only a rankling sense of humiliation and necessity, forbidding concord between the nations.

"There has appeared, of recent years, in Great Britain, a marked antagonism between the awakened Christian conscience and the consciousness of the necessities of militarism. Although, since 1856, we have taken no part in European campaigns, and for a longer period there has not been any real fear of the invasion of our island, we have had an unbroken experience of fights on the Asiatic and African continents. There has not been a year, Henry Richard used to tell us, during which we have not had some 'little war' on hand. The press correspondents have kept us acquainted with the details of the campaigns, with the result that national interests have been a burden and a pain to the sensitive soul. On the other hand, there have been the most open acknowledgments that, in military matters, the law of Christ must be disregarded. Lord Lytton, once Viceroy of India, some of whose verses are deservedly admitted into a book of devotion, '*The Cloud of Witness*,' told the Glasgow students, in his address as Lord Rector of the University, that

between nations the word 'morality' has no place. And Lord Wolseley's 'Soldier's Pocket Book' has been more than once quoted from, extracts being given which teach young soldiers how to deceive when on spy duty. He has written that if a soldier is to succeed in this, he must lay aside the belief that 'honesty is the best policy.' We have given up the practice of praying in our churches for the success of our arms, and keeping days of thanksgiving for our victories. There is here, at least, the merit of frankness, but we do not contemplate without distress the fact that, in a large part of our national life, which claims the bulk of our taxes and engrosses the time of our Parliament, we are obliged to forget that Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords.

"Recent events, moreover, have shown us that war fails conspicuously where its pretensions have been the loudest—it does not inspire and sustain the loftiest courage. Bravery in fighting is one of the primary animal instincts ; the tiger has it, so has the dog, so has the Norwegian lemming, a little creature you could cover with the palm of your hand, and which has not the sense to avoid drowning itself when in its migration it reaches the sea. This form of courage seems pretty equally distributed ; the fortitude which enables a few hundred British soldiers to await the onslaught of a host of Kaffirs or Nubians, we equally admire in the resolution of the naked barbarians advancing against the irresistible fire from Maxim guns. There is a higher power of courage of which war knows nothing. If it were not so sad a spectacle, we might find boundless humour in the fact that Europe has been, for fifty years, massing armies which to-day it trembles to behold, perfecting weapons of precision until it is afraid to use them. History knows few more disgraceful sights than the 'Concert of Europe ;' civilisation cowering before barbarism ; the most contemptible monarch of the continent allowed to work his wicked will, because the civilised and Christian Governments were afraid of what might happen if any of them opposed him. Seven hundred years of martial training have destroyed the heroic temper of the Crusades. The fancied necessities of militarism efface that moral courage, that chivalry and tenderness of honour, which the Gospel has called into being. Lord Kitchener is not brave enough to spare the Mahdi's tomb ; the Emperor of Germany is not brave enough to discourage duelling and bid his officers lay by their arrogance towards the civilian ; a French court-martial is not brave enough to pronounce him innocent whom no one believes to be guilty. Even the Tsar's Rescript, noble as it was in conception, and benignant as we hope it will be in result, had the taint of terror in it ; the nations were called to consider the arrest of armaments which they

had all provided and which they were all afraid they might have to use.

“ We may frankly aver that indignation is an honest impulse, that resistance of wrong, the determination to put it down, ought to have an abiding place in human action ; that the call to war, because it is an appeal to common, not to individualistic effort, may startle the selfish into warmth of heart ; and that the discipline, of which the military system has been up to now the chief exponent, has trained men in the subordination of self to society. We may recognise that humane sentiment has, from the beginning, tempered the sufferings and the humiliations of war ; and that, under Christian influences, regard for the wounded and tenderness toward the vanquished, individually, have come to be prevailing sentiments. And we may wish that this pitifulness may have full play when whites are in conflict with coloured men as well as in what is called ‘ civilised warfare.’ But it has become conspicuously clear that war is no instrument for the accomplishment of the highest ends ; and that involves —since the highest human ends are always in the consciousness of the true follower of Christ—that it has become hard, and will become impossible, for Christian people to employ it. War may be a fitting instrument for men inflamed with the lust of possession ; it fails us when we invoke its aid for unselfish uses. French and English statesmen were aroused to prompt action when Major Marchand was reported at Fashoda ; those same statesmen had been pitifully powerless when the Sultan was breaking the Treaty of Berlin.

“ What we have seen during the last fifty years has been the simultaneous development of the military system and the Christian ideal of life and conduct. It is the growth of the Christian sentiment which has raised the standard of courage, putting the grace of consideration for others into the foremost position once held by nerve, which has made men so sensitively truthful that the system of espionage and the secret service have become intolerable ; which has taught us the brotherhood of man, so that we feel as if in war we incurred the guilt of fratricide ; and brought home to us the truth, that, as death hushes all strife, so should life, of which death is but the solemn consummation. And while the churches have been learning to feel all this, Governments have been frankly pagan. Now and then there has been a war in which the specific end has seemed to commend itself alike to the churches and to nations. In reality, the ultimate purposes in view of the churches and the nations have been radically different. Moreover, the churches and the nations do not acknowledge the same sanctions in their conduct, nor obey the same motives ; and when you change sanctions and motives, you alter the whole

ethical system. The Christian law is this—‘So is the will of God, that with well-doing ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.’ ‘It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.’ There is not a cabinet in the world where this law is accepted, even dreamed of, as a possibility in national action. No statesman—not even he who withdrew the British forces after the defeat of Majuba Hill, because he had learned that he had begun an unjust war in ignorance of the facts of the case—has ever thought of exposing national existence to such a strain. Yet, until this law is accepted for nations, as it is loyally and obediently accepted by many individual Christians, there will be no security against war. Commercial necessities give us no pledge of peace; enlightened self-interest is not to be trusted, the self is sure to dim the light; the fear of war will not prevent war. And God will not give us peace in any other way than that which is revealed to us in Christ. We cannot enter into alliance with God on our own terms. The suspicion that it is so—I speak not for other nations, I speak for that I know the best and love the most—the suspicion that this is so has checked the military enterprise of Great Britain, and made the wars in which we engage the heaviest burden on patriotic hearts. That is the reason why we have not had, for many years, a Royal Proclamation inviting us to prayer for success in war and thanksgiving for victory; why millions of our children have never heard such services, and it is a forgotten art among us how to pray that we may win battles. Instead there has come to us a great yearning, a continual cry of the heart:—

‘Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget.’

“The story of the Transvaal difficulty is full of instruction. It was a Christian action, so far as it went, to make concessions to the Boers. It was by no means a declaration of the policy of non-resistance; it was an acknowledgment that, as the war was now seen to have been begun under a misconception, nothing, not even the shame of defeat, could justify its continuance; it was the endeavour of a strong nation to make amends to a weak one. But a noble deed can never stand alone; it must be followed by a noble course of thinking and of action, or the last end may be worse than the first. If both the English and the Boers had been Christian peoples, as many individuals are so, abiding brotherhood would have been the result. But neither of the nations understood the grandeur of their opportunity. The Boers traded on the consideration which had been shown them; the majority of the English people thought their

Government had been weak. And when the valorous heart which conceived this new departure had ceased to beat, and the stately voice was heard no more which said 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace to men of goodwill,' when again the heresy that 'Gain is godliness' asserted itself, the old passion was rekindled, and reason and justice were unheard. Not for a moment have I regretted that the great experiment was made; it will be followed, even if it seems to have failed. But I do not wonder that men who have not learned the secret of the religion they profess regard Mr. Gladstone's policy as something to be repented of.

"There will be no end to the liability of war until nations are Christian in the sense that many men and women are so; and in this sense there is not, and never has been, a Christian nation. But there are nations in which many are troubled about what they tolerate, and asking how war can be stayed. The Hague Conference has brought us light, more than a gleam of light; it is like the dawning of the day. The original proposal has been rejected, humane suggestions were made, only to be voted down; but the congress has ended more successfully than most of us could have dreamed. The body of the Rescript lies mouldering in the grave, but its soul goes marching on. The nations have been told to look to arbitration as a means of preventing war, and methods by which to make it effective have been suggested. Arbitration is a method of law; and if it is true that '*inter arma silent leges*,' it is also true '*inter leges silent arma*.' One great cause of war is this, neither men nor nations will believe they are wrong when they are judges in their own cause. The hope of peace through arbitration is this, civilised men and nations may believe they have made a mistake if impartial authorities tell them so. There have been some international arbitrations; in few of them has either side been satisfied with the award; in none have both sides been satisfied. Nevertheless, the awards have been accepted; wars have been prevented; and arbitration has been resorted to again. So has duelling disappeared in States where the law can be trusted. It is not that wrong is never done, even wrong which law knows not how to rectify; but the habits of appealing to law takes away the desire to resort to arms.

"Arbitration is law, is reason; and, where law and reason are, Christ's words may be spoken and will be heard. Arbitration will not destroy greed, the lust of possession, and the pride of power; but it will provide the conditions in which better influences may prevail. We shall not be released, by the acceptance of arbitration, from the duty to proclaim the Christian way of overcoming

international evil with international good ; we shall indeed have better opportunities of preaching this, and we ought to use them. Unless we do so, we must not complain that this truth cannot be received. All truth is received by some when it is set forth, very often received by most unlikely people. Some faithful sons of the Pilgrims have criticised John Robinson for censuring Myles Standish, in that matter of the 'poor Indians,' some of whom Robinson wished had been converted before any had been killed. We do not read that the 'choleric captain' himself resented the admonition. It is always the idealist who leads ; the practical man for ever trots behind. Myles Standish is sure to listen to John Robinson, if only John Robinson will speak, and speak in time."

It was hardly to be expected that in the inflamed condition of public feeling during the war a pacific apostolate could be carried on in peace. In March and April, 1900, Dr. Mackennal found himself compelled to face one of those internal disturbances within his own congregation which sometimes give a minister anxiety. One of the members of his church addressed a letter to him intimating his intention to withdraw on account of the "political sermons" which had recently been delivered, and particularly one which he described as the "infliction of March 4th," the only condition on which he could remain being that the pulpit should not be degraded in the future as it had been in the past. Mackennal's reply was a model of gentleness and dignity :—

"17th March, 1900.

" It is not an easy thing for me to reply to your letter ; for, with every desire to conciliate your friendship, I am afraid I may only add to your trouble. It will be a matter of personal regret to me to miss you from our services ; I am quite as regretful that you should feel yourself forced out of a church with which you have been connected longer than I, and I am sorry that you should have felt pain in listening to pulpit teaching.

" But I cannot give the 'assurance' you ask for. I have no desire to inflict my presence on an unwilling people ; but I have not received my commission to preach from those who have accepted my services. It is neither from levity nor opiniativeness that I

speak as I do on the subjects you allude to, but under a very different compulsion."

The objector replied at some length to the effect that the ground of his complaint was that the preacher had gone beyond his commission. Mackennal replied :—

"27th March, 1900.

"Your fuller statement of your objection to some things I have said from the pulpit, indeed to my speaking on these themes in the pulpit at all, is before me. I recognise your right to remonstrate with me, and I thank you for replying to my former letter. But controversy, even discussion of the point between us is useless ; and with all courtesy to you I decline to be put on my defence.

"There is, however, one misstatement in your letter so serious that I write at once to correct it. I have never 'urged armed interference on behalf of the cruelly treated Armenians.' I have always been opposed to it. I am of opinion that the dependence of the Sultan on the goodwill of Great Britain was so intimate that determined and continued pressure, of a diplomatic sort, would have been successful ; as indeed the pressure of America, in some small cases, was successful. And I would have had that pressure exercised. But I am sure that no word has ever fallen from my lips counselling, or even contemplating, armed interference.

"Your letters have both shown so candid a spirit that I have no doubt you will accept my correction of the impression you have received."

As the correspondent took the responsibility of printing and circulating the letters, the remaining members of the church took the opportunity of expressing their confidence in their pastor. The wording of their letter is equally honourable to them and to Dr. Mackennal, and expresses admirably the nature of the tie which binds a free church to its pastor :—

"April, 1900.

"... While some of us may not accept all the teaching which you have felt it your duty to give, more particularly with respect to the present grave crisis in the affairs of the nation, and others of us are able to receive it in its entirety, we unite in protesting against any attempt to 'tune the pulpit,' to hinder you in any way or degree

from speaking to us as your conscience and judgment may dictate, believing, as we do, that your responsibility is not to us, but to Him who has called you."

With this letter the matter closed, and Mackennal never referred to it again, but an incident which took place shortly afterwards showed with what magnanimity he regarded it. A friend broached the subject in conversation, and thought to express his sympathy with Mackennal by saying hard things about the objector. Mackennal waited till there was silence, then said, "Two months after the death of my son Harry he sent me a photograph taken on his lawn, the best we have; and he told me he had wanted to send it before." It was easier for him to recall the kindness than the want of it.

The climax of this side of Dr. Mackennal's activity was reached at the Sheffield meetings of the Free Church Federation in March, 1900. The war fever was still at its highest, no public utterance in criticism of the policy of the war was permitted without exposing the speaker to the charge of being a "traitor." The newspapers with one honourable exception gave the public what it was supposed to want. The Premier in the House of Commons had given deliberate encouragement to those who denied the right of free speech to the counsellors of peace. With the courage of a quiet man, and in a spirit which made carping impossible, Dr. Mackennal chose this moment for a great public utterance on the moral personality of a nation and the sacrificial possibilities which may be involved in a nation's life. For weeks afterwards he continued to receive grateful letters from correspondents in England and America, thanking him, and thanking God, for his utterance. Contrary to his usual custom, he kept these letters, and it is impossible to read them without recognising the value of the truth which the

sermon itself declares, that in every great apostasy there are to be found two thousand who have not bowed their knees to Baal, and that with these lies the hope and the destiny of the nation. Many who knew Mackennal found their faith strengthened to endure to the end, and many who knew nothing of him wrote to say that he had saved them from despair. The sermon, from the text "*Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the nations, until the times of the nations be fulfilled*" (Luke xxi. 24), is printed in the Free Church Year Book for 1900. The following paragraphs are sufficient to indicate the line of thought:—

" . . . There are two facts in connection with God's discipline of the nations to which I would refer in passing:—

"Firstly, God's commands upon a chosen people are more exacting, His correction of their sins and imperfections, their ignorances and wilfulnesses, is more severe than that with which He visits people who have not received the Gospel. And among Christian nations themselves the canon of judgment is more urgent according as their spirituality is higher and the insight fuller into the revelation of Christ. This law runs through the whole Jewish story; and it is assuredly true of us who have, by God's grace, become citizens of the New Jerusalem. The prophet Habakkuk was greatly oppressed by the operation of this law. The Chaldeans were threatening the land—a people wilder, fiercer, harder, more impious than Israel; and the prophet makes appeal to the Lord: '*Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that canst not look upon perverseness, wherefore lookest thou upon him that dealeth treacherously, and holdest thy peace when the wicked swalloweth up the man that is more righteous than he?*' . . .

"The second law under which the nations have come in the times of their visitation is this—as the Lord has ever more light to break forth out of His holy Word, so His ethical demand on His people becomes loftier and more exacting. . . .

"It is of no use that we look back sorrowfully on the sins of our fathers, and say, 'If we had been in their day we would not have been partakers of their evil deeds.' The defection of Manchester, in 1857, which is not yet expiated, although it has cost Manchester her lead in English politics, was—not that there was no statue to Cromwell in her most public place, but that she rejected John

Bright and Milner Gibson for their protest against the Crimean War and the invasion of China. . . .

“This is the meaning of our text. We have come into the heritage of Israel ; we share Israel’s probation, its more searching law of judgment, its more exacting ethical demands. ‘*The times of the nations*’ are not measured by days and years, but by seasons of Divine appeal, new revelations of Gospel truths, quickenings of the conscience of the churches, great moral crises when opportunities are presented to the nations ; and it depends on their action whether they fall back on the purblindness of their fathers or pass into fuller light.

“I. The first lesson I want to impress on the council, if you will bear with me, is the reality and sacredness of the national life. There is a solidarity of the nation, and the obligation of that solidarity, the guarantee of the nation’s permanence, is the conformity of the public conscience to its highest ethical ideals. This truth had a firm hold of the Separatists of the sixteenth century ; under its impulse ‘our exiled fathers crossed the sea.’ The Covenanters of Scotland were possessed by it ; it was the source of the power of Oliver Cromwell. In the eighteenth century, under the limited freedom of the Toleration Act, and the miserable nominalism which then passed for philosophy, it was lost sight of, but it was recovered in the Evangelical revival. Not consciously recovered, for that revival was, at first, a great reassertion of religious individualism. Personal faith, personal conversion, personal holiness —these were the Methodists’ watchwords. But the truth was there, in their broad humanity, in their passion for the salvation of all men. It was working as a hidden leaven, and it appeared when, with liberty of political action, the pure, humane, godly life which had been nourished in our churches was able to express itself in public law.

“No one now is satisfied with the cheap sophism that you cannot make men sober by Act of Parliament. Law is an utterance, and can be a powerful educator, of the individual conscience. The American people have had to declare it unconstitutional for a State to send a polygamist to represent them in Washington. It was always in the power of individuals to live chaste lives. But monogamy has entered into the legislation of all civilised communities. It was always in the power of individuals not to have slaves, but slavery has been removed by the law of Christian lands. The care of the poor was for many centuries left to the church ; then it became an individual responsibility. The deserving poor have become in England, during our own time, an increasing charge on national resources.

Keat

"These are only illustrations of the fact that there is a national conscience, and we are rightly glad that we have so many illustrations of the truth, and shall see many more. But while we rejoice, let us remember our responsibilities. We are under solemn obligations to impress the truth upon our people, to be ready for the extension of the principle to international concerns and the treatment of our subject races. '*Who knoweth whether thou hast come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*' We want to leave, not a home, nor churches merely, but a country, to our children. What has England been to us? Our cradle and our school; nay, more, it has been the womb in which each one of us was formed. England is our mother-land. That we are Englishmen is the earliest, latest, deepest fact in our personality; when we die the name of England will be found written on our hearts. What can we do for our country but leave it, our heritage—made purer, loftier, more gracious, and more Christlike—to our children?

"II. The true seat of a nation's life, that is the next thought I want to impress upon you. It is the conscience, and the national conscience must be Christian. Distinguish between the Government and the people, and, in the people, between their essential, enduring life, and their temporary, casual moods. Governmental action, in an ideal State, would be the exact representation of the people's inmost and permanent thought. It never has been so; it is not so to-day. Even in England, where perhaps the ideal has been most nearly approached, it is not so. The English State is disliked and suspected by other nations, but the individual Englishman—as many of you have found in your travels—is commonly welcomed, is trusted and beloved. It is easy, but it is not wise, to put this down to jealousy of our national well-being. The true reason is that many Englishmen are Christians, but the traditions of government are not Christian. It must be ours to make them so. The philosophy of history is to be found in Isaiah's doctrine of 'the remnant': '*Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.*' '*But yet in it is a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten; as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.*'

Keat

"Ours has not been a perfect history, but we have been a trustworthy people in the long run. There has been a national conscience in advance of the traditions of governments. Read the story of the times of Elizabeth, as described by Kingsley; the cruelty, the rapine, the pride, the gluttony and drunkenness. But the heart of the people

wearied of their excesses ; they could listen to the voice of faithful teachers. Recall the story of Warren Hastings. He was at one time the most popular Englishman alive ; he is not so to-day. He was successful in India, but he was put upon his trial. He was acquitted, but the heart of the nation condemned him. The East India Company at last had its charter revoked, and our rule in India is increasingly, because of the conscience of 'the remnant,' a humane rule, seeking the development of the native population, and not lacs of rupees.

" III. The progress of moral conceptions is exceedingly slow. They emerge in the minds and hearts of a few who are 'instant in season and out of season,' reproving, exhorting, instructing, with all long-suffering and diligence. How slowly some great Christian ideas have made their way ! The early churches could not abolish slavery, although within the church the freeman and his bondservant were equal. How long it took to learn the lesson of the single and permanent wife ! The Christian doctrine of the dignity of labour, and the obligation resting on all to work, the conspicuous New Testament doctrine that covetousness is a sin, and that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive,' fortified, as these are, by apostolic authority and the memory of Christ—through what a force of prejudice, and bad tradition, and scorn and terror are they still making their way ! International arbitration, as a substitute for war, has been before us again and again, and within a year of the Hague Conference it seems to have died. It is not dead, it only seems to slumber. '*Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.*' '*Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God ?*'

" But we must not rest on our achievements. The price of advance is unending effort. Only by ceaseless readiness to learn the truths that rebuke our selfishness, bring our pride low, call on our courage and tax our faith, shall we be found worthy of our place within the holy city. The kingdom of God is always for those only who bring forth the fruits thereof.

" IV. The hardest lesson we have to learn is that a nation which would fulfil the perfect law of Christ may have to give its life for its testimony. For many years the thought has pressed upon me that, if England is to fulfil her noblest destiny, she may be called to be a sacrificial nation. And I have had the dream that the sacrifice might be in the cause of peace. If England, in the plenitude of her power, should lay down every weapon of a carnal warfare, disband her armies, call her fleets from the sea, throw open her ports, and trust for her continual existence only to the service she could render to the

world, and the testimony she would bear to Christ, what would happen? I know not, and the doubt, the knowledge that anyone who would speak of such a thing would not command a serious hearing, has made me a lonely man. But it comes again and again; the longing will not be repressed. It might be that Christ, Whose 'finished work' is the trust of His people, would declare that the purpose of such a sacrifice is sufficient, that the example would be enough, and that the nation would continue to be, living and strong in the gratitude of all peoples. But, if otherwise, what then? Such a martyrdom would quicken the conscience of the world. I turn and read the description given us by the second Isaiah of the 'remnant,' now become the whole nation, under the image of the suffering servant of the Lord—*'despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; despised and esteemed not.'* But he is also to be exalted and extolled, to be very high. . . .

"I am sure that, so long as the vision of a martyred nation appears absurd and impossible, there will never be a Christian nation. This also I believe, that until our advocates of peace fairly apprehend that a nation martyred for Christ's sake may be within the counsel of God, their advocacy will lack its final inspiration and victorious appeal. . . .

"The end of the New Testament prophecy is—the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of Christ; but it is not certain that any nation now in existence will share in that consummation. We have no more reason for affirming the indefinite continuance of national life than for believing that we ourselves shall not die. In both cases the prospect of death brings with it the awe of judgment. It depends on the use any people make of the 'new occasions' which 'teach new duties,' on their readiness to follow 'Christ's bleeding feet.' 'Toiling up new Calvaries ever, with the Cross that turns not back,' whether their memory shall perish in merciful oblivion, or their influence shall survive among the energies of the kingdom of God."

The following letters indicate the line of action which Dr. Mackennal adopted during these troubled years:—

To the Editor of "The Free Church Magazine."

"14th November, 1899.

"You must excuse me from sending you any contribution on the Transvaal question for your next issue. I have read with sympathy and approval your own prefatory words; but I confess that, in my opinion, he who says least of the terms and conditions of the peace is the wisest man. We are not yet within sight of peace, and the

progress of the war must seriously affect the conditions under which peace is to be made.

“Having been out of England when this matter was discussed in our committee, I have not been able to understand the position of our Free Church Council leaders in connection with it. But I deprecate exceedingly the bringing in of prejudice against the Boer, and the assertion of the prospect the war will give to British Christianity to assert itself, to win a vote for the policy of the Government. I am glad you are affirming that we must hold ourselves prepared to act generously and righteously, for assuredly international justice does not demand that we should suppress a nation’s independence; beyond this I can at present say nothing.”

To the Rev. Thomas Law.

“1st February, 1901.

“It will, as you suggest, be impossible for me to attend the organising committee’s meeting next Tuesday. And I have no suggestions to offer. The fact is that I am so distressed at the silence we are obliged to keep about all the iniquities of this wicked war that I have, for the present, lost interest in the committees of the council. I hope my interest will return in time.”

To Mr. A. W. Whitley.

“19th October, 1901.

“Thank you for your kind and sympathetic letter. It is a sorrowful fact that those of us to whom the sinfulness of this war appears so clear that it is a duty of a solemn order not to trifle with the conviction, are reduced to the necessity of private communication; and that too, when we believe that there is an unaroused feeling of the same sort in many of our churches which does not let itself be aroused.

“We have come to the point in England that it is equally dangerous to draw back and to go on. And the sense of national peril in anything which would look like a confession of error or weakness in our position keeps many from uttering their minds. But the way of return will be very hard, and the further we go on the wrong path, the drearier and more sorrowful will be the way of recovery. I pray God very earnestly that the way of recovery may not prove impossible.

“We have to cheer each other in these dark days, and I know no other encouragement than the assurance that Christ’s Kingdom is sure to prevail, and the hope that praying, watching people may yet see the nation’s conscience touched.”

To Mrs. Nairn.

"BOWDON, 12th April, 1900.

"... Now for a preacher's word about the sacrificial nation. I think that for a nation, as for an individual, to rush on martyrdom as a glorious, and easy, way out of difficulties, would be an offence; an act of cowardice instead of fidelity. But the doctrine has been taught for ages that the first obligation of a nation is self-preservation. I think that is no more true for nations than for individuals. We Christians live under the habitual sense that it were better for us to die than to cease to act Christianly; and this accepted canon of the Christian life is the source of all Christian heroisms of the humbler sort. If it should come to be accepted as a national obligation that we must follow Christ, even at the price, if needs were, of national death, the whole region of politics would be other than it is.

"I have a little book in the press, in which one aspect of this subject is involved rather than expressed, and I will send it you when it is out.

"I wonder if you saw an article last year in the *New Review*, entitled 'The Law of the Beasts.' The writer laid down as an axiom that the law of the beasts—that is, self-preservation—was the only possible law for nations; and that justice, mercy, consideration for weakness, very good in their place for individuals, were utterly out of place in national affairs. I think that, unless we are prepared to recognise that a nation might have to give up its very existence rather than be false to its ethical convictions, we shall find it impossible to resist this conclusion.

"I don't know if you are aware that Lord Wolseley in his 'Soldiers' Pocket Book' has taught much the same doctrine. He distinctly says that a soldier called to spy duty, and any soldier who is clever enough is liable to the call, must dismiss from his mind any such notion as that 'honesty is the best policy.' . . ."

CHAPTER XVII

A SPIRITUAL DIRECTORATE—CULMINATION

“Henceforth I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”—ST. JOHN.

MACKENNAL's correspondence with Mrs. A. culminates in 1898. After this, although the friendship continues, and there are letters at intervals till 1904, Mackennal knew that his correspondent's troubled spirit had reached quiet waters. It is clear also that he felt that the highest service he could render her was to teach her to lean no longer on his aid, but to trust to her own increasing consciousness of God's presence in her life. Her first letter is one to which Mackennal refers in several subsequent letters.

14th February, 1898.

“. . . In the course of my reading and thinking yesterday I seemed to get a sudden new light on a very old difficulty, but it does not stand very well the test of cold daylight consideration, after a night's sleep. Yet I am not willing to part with it altogether. You can tell me whether it is worthless or not.

“I was reading Dr. Dale's book, 'The Living Christ,' and had come to p. 14-15 where he speaks of the intense reality of the sense of guilt. He says, 'The evil things which a man has done cannot be undone; but when they have been forgiven through Christ, the iron chain which so bound him to them as to make the guilt of them eternally his has been broken; before God and his own conscience he is no longer guilty of them. This is the Christian mystery of justification, &c.' I finished the paragraph, closed the book and thought. 'Mystery indeed; such words have absolutely no intelligible meaning to me, I cannot read any sense into them. That 'iron chain' is the man's own personal identity. How can forgiveness, remission, repentance, suffering (his own or another's) make any difference or make him one whit less guilty, whilst that remains unbroken?' Then like a flash came the thought, does it remain unbroken? What about regeneration, the new birth, the new creature in Christ? Is that

what Paul means when he says 'our old man is crucified with Him,' and 'he that is dead is justified from sin?' Is there any sense in which the 'new creature' in Christ can honestly so realise the break in the personal identity of his spirit as to say, 'my body is the same, my physical brain is the same and retains the old memories of shame and sorrow, but I am new—a new soul—the guilt lies on the thing I was, not on me. I am not responsible for the sins of the old man—dead and crucified with Christ.' Would that be true? Could it? Then indeed the burden might roll off, and the iron chain be broken.

"I dwelt on this thought and read through most of Romans and Galatians and Hebrews, seeking confirmation, and finding *some*. But now I am met by two questions. First, what need then for an atonement, and where does it come in, and how could Christ's death slay the old evil, guilty soul in us and cause us to be born again?

"Secondly, if you are re-born, when was it? Can you separate by a hard and fast line the old life from the new? And even if you could, have you not sinned since, and often, are you not guilty of sins this day, last week? Does not the 'old man' die hard, and live alongside the new, and make us 'do the things that we would not'? And what are these phrases, '*Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*,' a comfortable creed? Why is Paul so thankful in the last verse? Was he a 'new creature'—'*no more he that lived, but Christ that lived in Him*' (Gal. ii. 20)—and yet '*served with the flesh the law of sin*'?

"Alas, the personal identity is not changed. The iron chain is unbroken, and the guilt unremovable, however pardoned, unpunished, or forgotten. Is it not so? Does not Dale himself say (p. 14) that although the breakage of that iron chain would lift a man from hell to heaven 'the supposition (in its completeness) is an impossible one?'

"And yet, I think I did get a light—what was it? There is a new life in us which has no fellowship with sin—we are alive unto God, and at peace with Him. Our old selves, even our present bad selves, are often incredible to us. . . ."

THE FLASH OF LIGHT.

"18th February, 1898.

"I am more glad than I can express that you got that 'flash of light'; I believe it will be like 'the path of the just,' shining more and more unto the perfect day. It seems to me the very essence of Paul's teaching in Romans, only may I venture to say, the Apostle Paul is wiser than you, inasmuch as he accepted the thought as a guiding

truth that was both to interpret and gradually to mould his spiritual experience; while you are ready to throw yourself down from the pinnacle because it is not at once realised in your own consciousness. Why, the very consciousness in which it is to be realised must be formed; and it will not come about like the bursting of an iron chain: but rather as the consciousness of a faithful and ever-becoming-happy wedded life quite effaces 'the power of the memories' of the old conflict time of courtship.

"The Apostle Paul teaches us that by faith in Christ we are made partakers of a new life. And, writing to legally minded Romans, he treats that new life as having new obligations, new conditions, in which are loosened and dissolved those of the old. That is a great spiritual truth; it was apprehended as a fact in the consciousness before it was taught; Paul is only trying to translate it into the language of Roman jurisprudence, and he was not absolutely successful, for he varies between the two conceptions of the man being dead to the law, and the law being dead to the man. Dale tried to put the same great truth into the language of his very individualistic philosophy, and you are trying to put it into your ethics (learned from Channing), and I don't think you are either more successful than was Paul.

"Meanwhile, you can't give up the truth itself; it commends itself to your faith; it will fashion your whole being; and then you will understand it. It will be the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which will make you free from the law of sin and death.

"Let me note two or three points in your letter. First about that indissoluble personal identity. Doesn't it strike you that it would be as true to say that you are not the person who sinned, say thirty years ago, as that you are? We throw ourselves back, with all the quickened

spiritual sensibilities of to-day, and we imagine ourselves of to-day doing the things we did. But we are not. It was not the person who feels what we are feeling to-day who did that ; the person who feels as we are now feeling will not do that ; cannot sin, because born of God.

“ Comfortable doctrine, you may say, slightlying, as if the Apostle Paul were an ethical juggler, bent on easy self-deception. Last year there was a story published, called ‘ Where ignorance is bliss,’ or something like that. A young minister and his fiancée had been listening to an earnest setting out of the doctrine that repentance is possible, and such a renewal as clean annihilates the past. The girl was lifted up with universal charity at the thought, and in his enthusiasm her lover confessed that ten or twelve years before, previous to his conversion, he had forged. And she could not bear the revelation ; though she knew he was a saint, she broke the engagement. Ought she to have done so ? Was it all a mere figment that he was not the man who had so sinned ?

“ You say, where comes in the atonement ? Just here ; we require to reconcile these transcendent, but most real, facts of the spiritual life to the constitution of society. We cannot admit the plea, ‘ I am changed,’ in any court. It would be too easily pleaded ; it doesn’t answer the fact that what the ‘ I ’ of thirty years since did has entered into the history of human life and is working on. Rather it fell back into that mystery of iniquity out of which it arose, enlarging and aggravating the sum of evil. It is in counteraction of that that Christ suffered and died, and that His people suffer and die with Him. It is grace overcoming sin. Grace as an impartation ; yes, and grace in historic manifestation and action.

“ May I suggest to you that perhaps you are confounding wounded self-esteem with guilt ? I am sure you will catch

my meaning, and more quickly than I can set it out, more vividly, too, perceive the distinction. If that is so you will also understand that you will never have the peace of which the Apostle Paul speaks until you are willing to let the self-esteem be crucified, and to take the torture. Christ does not provide a cure for wounded self-esteem; but the wound pains no more, when self-esteem is lost in abiding gratitude to Him.

“And then you speak as if the death of the old man was a movement like the ceasing of the heart to beat. Only to see that one is the victim of a metaphor here is to be delivered from the fallacy.

“I have to go in to a meeting in Manchester this evening, and have no time to write more; only this—in the new life there are terrible possibilities of failure; but the failure and the guilt will not be of the new life. And they are not inevitable. The Divine nature and our own purpose are both invoked by the Apostle against it. If you walk in the Spirit you will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.*”

Mrs. A. is grateful that the “sparkling thing which fell out of the sky is a real jewel and that she may keep it for her own.” Is it not another proof of our natural and original kinship with the Divine that we should feel so strongly that suffering and the natural penalties of sin can be borne if only there is a clear air between us and our God. She does not understand the Atonement, but she is sure of the new life, most grateful that it is possible to defy the bogey of personal identity, and to feel that she need no longer be dragged away from communion with God by a rush of evil memories of life-long sins against light and knowledge.

She challenges the sentence in Dr. Mackennal’s letter, “in the new life there are terrible possibilities of failure, but the failure and the guilt will not be of the new life.” Surely the new life makes failure worse, not lighter. Is not this the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, “there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sin,” &c., although she cannot reconcile that with the teaching of Romans. It is impossible to say what her New Testament has become to her these

last two years. It is like a mystic window opening from this dark sense-bound state into the fresh air of the real life. When she is quite stupid, blind and crazy with pain and can't read a word, to feel it in her hand under the pillow brings hope and patience and soothing. She opens it as children open a birthday parcel, never knowing what good thing she will find. She wants to share this treasure with others, and is particularly thankful to write to him because the new sacerdotalism, in the shape of a new curate, has turned her away from the communion to which she loved to go with her husband and boys. The curate suggested confirmation, to which she replied that having been a member of the Church of Christ for thirty years she would consider such a thing to be as wrong as it would be to go through the ceremony of marriage over again, thereby throwing a doubt on all her previous life; also she owed the supreme debt of her religious life to the Congregational ministry.

DEAD SELVES.

"22nd February, 1898.

" You have laid me under obligation again by challenging, or questioning what I said about the new sins possible in the Christian life. I had in view the new temptations which the new experience, and the enlarged obligations of the spiritual life bring in, coupled with the fact that we are born children and not men and women. But I ought to have remembered that the Apostle Paul treats sins of this very class as 'works of the flesh.' I retract what I said, and write at once to say so.

" Do you ever see the 'Temple Magazine?' There is a very powerful story in it, called 'Dead Selves,' which, if you can stand the emotional strain, I should like you to read. I took it up last night, and was startled to find how exactly it represents some part of what I had said to you. The writer hardly takes account of the fact that there can be no sin without guilt, but she vividly portrays the inevitable mistake we make when we judge the former transgression by the quickened conscience. I call this inevitable; I do not call it morbid; we doubtless are intended to judge human nature in the light of Christ.

But if we think of our sins as in the light of God's countenance, and then learn how hateful they are, we must also bear in mind the absoluteness of the Divine promises, the tenderness of God's compassion, and the efficacy of His grace.

"Don't put down the awful words in the epistle to the Hebrews to the Apostle Paul. They represent a truth; but the whole epistle is not in the line of Paul's thinking concerning sin.

"If we identify ourselves with humanity, and take on our consciences the burden of the common guilt, we also may take the hope of the complete redemption wrought for humanity. I often reflect with awe and gratitude on St. Paul's words, '*He hath shut up all under sin in order that he may have mercy upon all.*' God does not chaffer with us about the measure of our guilt; He calls us to repent of sin, and He takes sin away. And in our identity with the common great transgression we find that sphere of service, sympathy, tenderness which does not indeed undo our past transgressions, but reconciles us to our own history, sinners forgiven and renewed—by showing how we may turn our past to grateful service."

Mrs. A. urges Dr. Mackennal to write a sermon on the "sins of the regenerate"—then she will have done something for her generation. St. John says, "they cannot sin," but they do. The first words of the 51st Psalm are almost unbearable, for it is against His "loving kindness and tender mercies" that we do sin. Where then is the in-dwelling life? When sin overtakes the regenerate is their trust disappointed? Will he give her the advice she needs in her case?

MENTAL MEDICINE.

"11th June, 1898.

"If I were to do as you ask me, give you some directions, I am afraid you would not take them. But I will try a little; may God help me to speak and you to hear. If I

am wrong in what I say, the detection of my error may guide you to the truth.

“I don’t think there will be much help for you until you can say, ‘Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar.’ The important thing in life, even for ourselves, is not that we be just, but that we see God’s righteousness and grace. Then you will have to give up crying out that other people are wrong. Suppose they are—St. John, and all those who have spoken out frankly what they have felt. They didn’t mean to aggravate your distress. They meant, poor half-enlightened souls, to be a help to others. You are not only bruising your knuckles, you are increasing the passion you suffer from, by your constant attacks upon them.

“Then you must take your medicine, and not cry out that it is doing you no good. It has done other people good, as you yourself would frankly allow; if for some unhappy reason of temperament, or perhaps some yet hidden purpose of God, it is not serving you as it has served them, you are not benefiting matters by crying out on the medicine. Are you acquainted with S. Colman’s lines?—

‘When ill indeed,
E’en dismissing the doctor don’t always succeed.’

“I am sure you remember that lay in ‘In Memoriam’ beginning—‘In these wild words I took farewell.’ And I am sure you must have been struck with the picture these presented; the tragic woes of the poet revealed as an inhuman disregard of the ‘half-conscious’ brothers and sisters.

“It may, perhaps, be that you will have to go deeper down yet before you get out of the valley of humiliation. I remember Dale, in one of his lectures on the Ten Commandments, speaking of the possibility of our dwelling on our sins as a heinous offence against the Divine majesty, and a stain on our own souls, with little thought of the

human aspect of sin, the wrong we have inflicted on others. And, perhaps, you may have to learn that lesson, that the greatest sin you are committing is the offence against the Christian brotherhood, in demanding under penalty of scornful dismissal that all their experience must be realised by you.

“I am going to America next week, and shall be away two months, but I don’t start until Thursday, so that if you want to protest against this letter, I shall have time to receive and perhaps to reply to your remonstrances. I have full hope that you will emerge into the sunlight, and when you do you will perhaps be tolerant even of St. John.”

Mrs. A.’s reply is full of contrition. She did not mean to attack St. John. No doubt St. John and the mystics are right, and she and others like her are wrong. She only wants to know where and how she is wrong. We do sin—are we then born of God? If he sends her any directions she promises to be a docile and obedient pupil.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION.

“13th June, 1898.

“Will you really follow my directions? I forewarn you it will be the hardest piece of work I have yet suggested to you, but I make a recommendation with some confidence. It is that you dismiss the subject of sinlessness in the regenerate absolutely from your mind for a season; say, for two months until my return. You will not wholly succeed, but you may in part. Treat the recurrence of your mind to the theme as a temptation and a danger, to be avoided, in prayerful dependence on God, as you would any other inward danger, by fixing the thoughts on some other subject.

“Take a month to master James’s 1st chapter. ‘*Blessed is the man*,’ &c.; ‘*let patience have*,’ &c., together with

St. Paul's II Corinthians, especially chapter xii. 1—9. And then if you have my little book, 'Christ's Healing Touch,' follow out the whole line suggested in the sermon on 'The Christian's Country.' If you have not the book, I will send it to you.

"Get also Dr. Berry's little book published by James Clarke and Co., 'Mischievous Goodness,' and if it lies in your way—though on this I don't insist—Henry Drummond's last book, 'The Ideal Life.'

"This is a masterful page of spiritual direction for you. I will tell you when I return why I have given you this advice. At present I can't, because it would only fix your thought on the very subject I want you to avoid.

"My giving you all this counsel indicates that I don't look upon you as an indocile pupil. If I had only outward counsel to give I would not have hesitated for a moment. But I am setting you a very hard task, one whose hardness I know by experience. The difficulty of it was in my mind, when I said you would not follow my directions. May God help you to make and continue the attempt. And dismiss from your mind the notion that your letter gave me 'displeasure.' It gave me great grief to see you bent still on following a track that only becomes the more baffling the more you persist in following it.

"Dwell on the mercy of God in receiving sinners; His goodness in the acceptance of our imperfect service; '*the sacrifices of God—a broken spirit.*' Remember who went down to his house justified rather than the other.

"If you can write to tell me you will follow these directions I shall receive your letter with gladness, and I shall pray that God will bless them. I know your prayer will follow me in my journey."

While Dr. Mackennal was in America, Mrs. A. re-read and arranged consecutively all his old letters. The task left her very

thankful for his wonderful patience and kindness, and for the unspeakable goodness of God. She saw that the light had steadily grown. She had light now on words which seemed dark when she received them. As she read, she wrote a running commentary describing the service each letter had been to her, and the points on which she was still uncertain. It is a pathetic diary—as much so as Amiel's in the last days of his illness—written between attacks of a pain which “swoops down like a great black bird on her head.” She dwells gratefully on the way Dr. Mackennal shared with her his own experience instead of wearying her with arguments. Much that he said was at first like an essay on music to a man born deaf, but now it is all full of meaning to her. She remembers what power and conviction came with the sentence, “The holy life is just the divine life flowing through us, living in us, and we in it; and this is not a figure of speech, but a reality.” The letters on the persons in the Godhead have been a great help. They will never make a Unitarian of her now.

Her common habit now is to give the morning hours to Christ, for then she is always in pain, and she needs to entrench herself in Him against what the day may bring. Then in the heat and burden of the day she finds refreshment in thinking of the Holy Spirit, and at night she comes home tired to the Father to make confession and give thanks and commend herself and those she loves into His hands. And yet she feels that all is one love, and one life, in one God, in whose different relations to our varying need we are more richly blessed.

She thanks him for his vindication of the phrase “consciousness of the Divine Life.” She knows now that what he said is true, but there are some forms of illness that obscure it; not a broken leg, or rheumatism, but when the brain is attacked. Then nothing seems sure. It is like the popular magazine nightmare of being run away with by a motor car which we can neither stop nor guide. But an unseen Hand is on the lever, and even when the smash comes it can draw us out of the wreck—all the “us” at least that is worth saving. What is she to do with these precious letters? Would he be willing to let her use them for the help of other bewildered souls?

THE USE OF THIS CORRESPONDENCE.

“2nd September, 1898.

“... If I could have anticipated the line of reading you undertook, I should have forbidden that too, for it was another form of that brooding over self which seemed

to me so dangerous. However, the reading of your letter has brought me so much interest that I have no desire to say that you were wrong. But do remember that there can be no cure for self-centred troubles in self-centring efforts or cares. And it really doesn't much matter whether the self-centre be in relation to justification or sanctification ; we have already learnt that our anxiety for justification may obscure the reality of our reconciliation with God ; some of us are learning that our anxious quest after holiness may be a serious hindrance to our sanctification. . . .

“ Your notes on our correspondence are so personal that I can't say anything about them. I couldn't even repudiate the excessive appreciation of my service without seeming to appropriate what remained after discount. What I do appropriate is the affection, and the spiritual purpose, and the sympathy with my object all through. I have often been very grateful to you for compelling me to face certain questions. The intensity of your desire to feel the reality of what you believe again and again came as a rebuke to my habit of contentment with the faith without the feeling.

“ I really cannot give you directions about the letters. I feel the same difficulty about yours. I have kept them all ; for all that has to do with the growth of a soul is sacred ; and to some poor creature, some day, it might be good to look into the correspondence. But we don't at present see the creature.”

GROWTH AND PERFECTION.

“ 24th September, 1898.

“ . . . In one of your recent letters you express a wonder as to whether I still held to the doctrine of the sermon on ‘ The Christian Conflict.’ I do most earnestly. This may perhaps appear inconsistent with other

language I have held as to the perfection of the life in the Spirit in itself. I daresay I cannot express my belief in entire consistency ; but one or two things seem to me clear.

"I don't believe in the perfection of any human being. The phrase one occasionally hears, 'relative perfection,' seems to me nonsense. No growing thing can be perfect ; nor can a being who derives his meaning from being one member of an organism, be perfect without the perfection of the organism. Ignorance, incompleteness, defective judgment, these belong to the very conception of life as we live it. And it is very certain that out of these things sin is sure to come. But that does not mean that we are bound to lie or swear or lose our tempers or do any wrong thing. And over against the incompleteness of our knowledge or judgment or feeling is the divine sufficiency. To be always in fellowship with God would be to be continually receiving the divine life. So soon, however, as we begin to think 'I,' 'I am all right here,' or any other mode of self-sufficiency, we are gone. . . ."

On October 20th Mrs. A. writes to tell Dr. Mackennal of an actual work of God in her life which cannot be undone. The sure and certain hope of which she had spoken before is more than a hope now. It is her daily bread. Some notes of an address on Romans v. which he had sent had opened her eyes to the difference between conscious disobedience and a low spiritual state. She found that there were disobediences which she had not given up, and which she could give up if she chose. So she ceased troubling about her character, left that to God, and gave up her small disobediences. It is impossible for her to tell how good God has been. It is easy to love Him wholly. Perhaps Dr. Mackennal will say, "This should have been years ago"—no doubt it should. She cannot be thankful enough for it however late in life's day.

She has been reading Trine's "In Tune with the Infinite." Had the book come a month sooner she might have strained her poor brain to the point of insanity trying to think things the way she wanted them. It is no doubt true that our thoughts have much to do with our bodily condition, but she feels that Dr. Mackennal's inference from that is much truer and safer than Trine's. Dr.

Mackennal says, "Therefore look upwards and outwards, turn from yourself to God." Trine says, "Therefore claim your wonderful powers as channels of the infinite energy, be God-men ; you can work miracles by fixing your thoughts on your wonderful individualities and powers. Think you are well and you will be well—even think other people well and keep them well." In his scheme three things are absent :—

- (1.) Ethical conditions for exercising this power.
- (2.) Belief in a personal God, and
- (3.) Any word about prayer.

It is loose thinking of this kind which has produced Christian science, which she thinks worse than faith-healing. Did not God make fire burn, and water drown ? Is not the material universe also God's ? Are we to ignore His laws and take that universe into our weak, sinful and foolish hands ? Surely this is audacious impiety and mischievous independence.

CALVINISM AS CRYSTALLISED SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE.

"23rd October, 1898.

"Your letter gave me very great gladness. I can hardly say I was expecting it, certainly I was not expecting it just now. God's ways of training souls are so various that I dared not try to forecast whether to you would ever be vouchsafed that sense of His grace and goodness which would overbear all your sense of your own weakness and sinfulness ; which would make you more glad in Him than distressed for yourself. But now it has come, I do rejoice with you with a gladness which doesn't need enlargement, as no enlargement could express it. Deep feeling is not uttered in expansive words.

"You are not right in thinking I should say, 'All this you might have had years ago.' I don't at all know whether you might. I bow with deep reverence before the ways of God. A good woman once told me, when I was calling on her, that she wanted to be proposed for church membership. For a reason I had, I said, 'What a pity you didn't tell me earlier.' She thought for a moment, and then as

her eyes filled with tears, she said, ' If you had come yesterday I couldn't have told you.' We know quite well we need not continue in sin, but whether we can step out at any time into the ' broad field of wealth unknown ' is a wholly different matter. There is something in us below our will, which our will obeys ; and there God comes, that is the region where works His effectual grace.

" You will have lots of variations, and you will have confession of sin to make probably. But I believe you are right in saying you will not lose what you have gained. Dr. Simon at Mr. Moncrieff's ordination was talking of the saints of fifty years ago. He said they believed God loved them ; that God so valued them and their fidelity that He furnished them with special grace that they might persevere. How different these things look to the doctrinaire, and to one who has had her eyes opened to the possible nearness to one another of God and the soul. The old Calvinistic doctrines, election, effectual calling, final perseverance, which seem to us so unreasonable, so shocking, take on new forms when they are the expression of our sense of God's absolute and utter trustworthiness, of our unworthiness, and yet our sense that He is to be thus trusted for ourselves.

" One thing let me say, I don't remember having seen the matter noted. You will know now what contrition means. Contrition is the penitence which souls know which have felt God's personal, discriminating grace for them ; and the knowledge adds a new poignancy, but also a new tenderness to the confession of sin. Psalm cxxxii. is one of the Psalms of the contrite.

" I must not go on. But you are right in your judgment of the book you described to me. ' Who loves the Maker needs must love His work,' so says Michael Angelo, and to the reverent man of to-day, with habits of thought

formed by conceptions of order which science has illustrated, that wilful habit of faith of which you speak is an offence and an impiety. . . .”

THE DESIRED HAVEN.

On November 3rd, 1898, Dr. Mackennal says :—

“. . . I am not writing you now a letter such as I have written before. I almost feel as if you were a ship that had reached haven. At least you know where haven is. I have before quoted to you those wonderful words, ‘*The Name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*’ What a marvellous people those Jews were; with some ideas so degraded as we think them, they had a spiritual insight which remains unsurpassed. I love to think of God’s large family; the larger the family the more room for you and me. . . .”

On November 27th Mrs. A. writes :—

“. . . I have looked up what you say in an old letter, about the possibility of ‘consciousness other than self-consciousness,’ and the probably intermittent experience, and it seems to me now that it must be so. Don’t we feel somehow that God shares our human consciousness, feeling along with us; and is not that why He is in a deep sense our only Friend, the only One who ‘knows all, yet loves us better than He knows?’ And is it not possible that when we are made ‘alive unto God’ He in turn admits us to share His consciousness according to our capacity; draws us, as it were, within the borders of His own feeling? I don’t see that this need interfere with our personality, there is surely room and play for all of us in the mere hem of the garment of the Being of God; and it seems the only way to account for what happens when we really ‘leave all to follow Him,’ and find, here and now, ‘a new heaven and a new earth.’”

“And this, the Consciousness and the Life, would be sure to be intermittent, strongest when we are humble, and loving and faithful; weakest when we are worldly and distracted, subject also to eclipse under bodily pain and depression. But its intermittence need lead to no doubt of its reality, or of the permanence of what it proves. Is this what Christ meant, ‘*If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with Me?*’

"Is this presumptuous? But God has taught us to dare. He has loved *us*, we could never have presumed to imagine that. . . ."

CONSCIOUSNESS AND LIFE.

"November 28th, 1898.

" . . . I have been very much interested in your remarks about the Consciousness and the Life. I think they are perfectly sound, and in some way or other, we must represent to ourselves the idea of a life coming in to complete our own. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit demands no such conception, for the very essence of that is the Divine Spirit becoming the individual man's spirit.

" But when we think of the life which is the source of all life, which yet is personal and the originator of other persons, and when from 'source' we banish the temporal accident, we are driven on some such speculations. The difficulty is that we know so little of the essence of life, personal life, that we may be dealing with accidents, when we think we are dealing with necessities. I have given a hint of this in the end of the preface to the 'Biblical Scheme.' . . ."

The following letter, dated from Museum Road, Oxford, is in reply to one from Mrs. A., in which she recurs to the perpetual practical difficulty in *prayer* of addressing the persons in the Godhead and yet conceiving them as One.

THE PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD.

"26th February, 1899.

" It is some time since your letter reached me. I am sure you will not attribute my delay in answering to indifference. Your question could not be answered in a hurry, and I have not had many favourable opportunities for both quiet thought and writing until now.

" Let me talk on this subject in my own way—perhaps that may suggest an answer to your perplexity.

" I have never felt the difficulty you propound, probably

because the supreme God was the earliest object of my reverence, and because it was not customary in those days to offer public prayer to Christ, whatever people may have done in private. One of my first discoveries when I went to a theological college was that Christ was not so much to me as I saw He was to some of my fellow students, and that my piety would be enriched if He were. This boon was soon granted to me in answer to prayer. Then it became an object of endeavour to have an equally real apprehension of the Holy Spirit as a personal influence. It has taken long years to gain that, but there are times now, when, feeling a special need of the inward, soul-changing, soul-sustaining, inspiring help, I am able to appeal directly to the Holy Spirit, as capable of affection, consideration, willingness to succour, and the wisdom of sympathy, and my whole heart goes out in personal appeal.

“The doctrinal ground-work of my faith is this. A social unity is a richer and fuller unity than an individual unity. We are compelled to seek in the Divine Nature itself for the social element. God is love, not self-love, but love; a true distinction of persons seems essential. This idea is saved from tritheism by regarding the subordinate, dependent relations of Son and Holy Spirit, as eternally and essentially within the Divine Being, the order of God’s nature, and not the creations of God’s will. But the Father remains the supreme—even to our piety He is apprehended as the supreme; in nature, there is equality; in relation, office, as the old theologians said, supremacy and subordination, authority and obedience. ‘*I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my heart.*’

“All prayer is thus essentially prayer to the Father; but as we are dependent on the Son—living Head—and the Spirit—living inspiration, infusing Himself into our inmost spiritual being; and as we believe in the action on

us of Son and Holy Spirit as sympathetic, it is an impulse of our piety to appeal to that sympathy, to be grateful for it, and to express our gratitude—in other words, to pray and to utter thanks. As the Son and the Spirit are carrying out the Father's will, to appeal to them is to honour Him. Our prayer to them must be grateful to Him. He cannot but rejoice in our fellowship with the Son in whom He is well pleased, in our opening our heart to the Spirit '*whom I will send unto you from the Father.*'

“Dr. Grosart published a few years ago two wise papers on ‘The Supercession of the Father by the Son in Popular Religion.’ That cannot be wise and good. ‘*In the beginning the word was with God,*’ ever moving toward Him, so John’s phrase signifies. ‘*When all things are subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also be subjected unto Him, that did put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.*’

“To speak of the Son and the Spirit as temporal relations, would, I think, not be wise nor accurate. But to speak of the Father as the original and the ultimate, of the Son and the Spirit as subsisting in the Divine Nature in dependence on the Father is, I think, quite legitimate. It is more. If the thought is not the whole truth, it is in that way the truth may be best apprehended by us. The truth which the New Testament indicates, of which Christ was conscious, and which, as we are able to apprehend it, we find enriching and sustaining our piety.

“In this way your question suggests itself to me, not so much as one of right or wrong, as of spiritual impulse, the need and affection of the soul. We need never fear that Christ will hold us guilty of want of regard to Him because we have learned from Him to pray to the Father. He might say to us, ‘*touch Me not*’; ‘*I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me and have believed that I came forth*

from God.' Nor need we fear that God will hold us guilty because our hearts move in awe and reverence and trust and love to the beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased, and because we utter to Christ what we feel.

"You are so quick a learner that I am sure I need not apply to you what I have put forth as a matter of my own thought and habit. We cannot know the Father without knowing the Son, nor the Son without knowing the Father. The doctrine of the complex Divine Being, three persons in one God, is given us not to divide our homage, but to enrich our affection and devotion.

"Having said all this, it would be very painful to turn away to other themes. If what I have said shall be in the slightest degree helpful to you, it will, I am sure, inspire you to say something that will be helpful to me. I am often thankful for the questions you put to me, for they compel me to go down into the realities of my own faith. . . ."

Two months later, in a letter dealing with other matters, he recurs to this question:—

". . . To me it seems neither impossible nor absurd that a larger, more complex, social personality may include individual personalities; and so the idea of a diversity of personalities in the one personal God is not ruled out as *a priori* absurd. It can at least suggest a 'figure of the true.' But it took me so long to grasp the somewhat elusive thought, and it is so incapable of proof, that I am sure I could not even communicate it to you. Only let me remind you, when you quote Bushnell, and dwell on his vehement declaration of inconceivableness, that he was young when he wrote 'God in Christ,' and more than once asks it to be remembered that it was a young man's book. I don't know that Bushnell ever removed from the position you adopt, but it is just one of those matters in

which an old man's feeling of wonder might come in to reverse a young man's positiveness.

"In the meantime, you are remembering that the difficulty is intellectual. The demand for liberty to make direct address to Christ, and the equally imperious demand that the man Christ Jesus, even ascended and glorified, shall not 'supercede' the Eternal Father, these are spiritual. If it were not for the intellectual necessity, we should no more be troubled by the varying impulses of the spiritual life than an affectionate child is by the fact, that sometimes for days together it is her father's hand she seeks when out walking, and again the mother's. The intellectual demand for consistency of thinking has in it a spiritual element, is part of our religion, but to subordinate other considerations to completeness of methodical thought where confessedly we have not full knowledge, is hardly a course to be respected, certainly not a course to be followed.

"And may I say it? To dismiss the regard for enrichment of spiritual thought because the Roman Catholics justify what we regard as superstition by this plea is scarcely wise. If we are to give no consideration to anything that someone has abused, we are limiting our chances of attaining to truth as well as to enlargement of interest.

"I think it highly probable you will attain to intellectual satisfaction on this point in some way of your own. Therefore I don't labour to convert you to my way of thinking."

The next letter contains sufficient internal evidence as to the nature of the communication to which Dr. Mackennal is replying:—

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"WEMYSS BAY HYDROPATHIC, SKELMORLIE, N.B.,
"29th April, 1899.

"You will see from the heading where I am. But the view out of doors is not clear like the drawing. The rest,

however, is here, and I am a child of the mist. Do you remember Wordsworth's description, 'Life on the hills, and in among the storms'? I think even Wordsworth had not a keener sense of the charm of the cloud and the rain than I have. Then there is the rest. I came yesterday, and I leave on Monday, but three days of entire removal from the place where I bear the yoke are good. . . . I am sorry that your nights are so dreary; is it impossible for you to gain the help of the Holy Spirit, so that He should keep you by night and by day? I know now, by experience of some years, that it is possible to have His controlling influence when our wills are powerless to direct our thoughts. Somewhere Bushnell has written on dreams; I can't direct you to the place. He points out that dreams, almost, if not entirely, worthless as prediction, are of immense value in revealing us to ourselves. All the impulsive, natural man comes out when the mind works apart from our wills. But we who believe in the full redemption of human nature cannot admit the thought that that impulsive natural being is to be left unsanctified and unwon.

"I remember what the Apostle Paul says about '*looking for a Saviour who shall change the body of our humiliation*,' but I also know that the heavenly citizenship, with its affections set on things above, may assert itself down in the very roots of the natural being. I want to put that before you as a possibility; how it may be attained God alone can determine for us. But your experience, when once you had chloroform without apprehension and came out of it without dismay, may help you to believe that here is something before you for your attainment.

"Don't say that you had that power once, but have lost it, and that the loss must be borne with as the final thing. Christ was not always raising dead people; the fact that

He raised three has changed the feeling of His people about death, and made them die gladly in hope of 'a better resurrection.' And that is an example of His whole method of action. He shows us what He can do that He may reconcile us to His cessation from doing it. 'It is not for us to know times and seasons,' but He knows them, and we know that they are in His power. And what is in His power we may pray for. 'Though the promise tarry, it will come, and will not tarry.'

"All this may seem paradoxical ; but not, I hope, to you.

"I am very glad that your thought has been dwelling on 'glorifying God.' I have never lost the impression produced on me years ago by some words of Kingsley's. He was speaking of 'justification by faith,' and he denied altogether the figment of men's 'original righteousness.' 'No man, or highest angel, ever was, or ever could be, righteous save by faith.' Here, again, is a great universal law ; we have nothing of our own, righteousness, sanctity, glory ; we have everything in God, and we have much from God. What matters it to the universe what I am—unrighteous, unholy, ignoble ? I am of no such account that the world should stand still and pity or bewail my failure and faultiness. Nor does it matter to me so much what I am as what God is. When this self-indifference is not an affectation, but a reality, this wonderful consequence comes out of it. The personality, which is beyond my personality, asserts itself, and I am so glad in the perfection of God that a new sense possesses me—'glory by proxy,' to use the phrase which I have challenged, but can't find a substitute for.

"Then there is another truth, which we know is waiting for us, but which we must no more anticipate impatiently than we must force open a budding rose. It does matter a good deal what I am, matters to me ; above all, matters

to God. And He will make me partake His righteousness, His holiness, His joy. The Holy Spirit, who is God, will become my Spirit, and the childhood and the Fatherhood will be in us what they were in Christ. '*I in them, and they in me, that they may be made perfect in one,*' the personality that is, which is beyond my personality, which does not destroy my individual life, but enters it and takes it up. The logic halts, but all the saints have had the vision of this, and have tried in different ways to express it.

"I think it is quite possible that your new thought about glorifying God may introduce you to that possession of and by the Spirit which will be yours by night and by day.

"*I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou hast given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me.*" Here is the experience, not for us '*with the glory which I had with thee before the world was,*' but the glory which we have in Christ Jesus.

"You are right about the capitals. In quoting from the Bible I adhere to the Biblical usage and drop them. But it would be so marked to depart from the established usage in our own writing to drop them that I use them. The true reverence in our use of the symbols of God is to call as little attention as possible to us and our usage; to divert attention as little as possible from God Himself to our own practice.

"I must stop, for I want to send this to you for Sabbath meditation."

The following notes by Dr. Mackennal on the subject of these letters appeared in the "Review of the Churches" in 1892. As they complement his treatment of the subjects discussed in his letters, they are added here:—

PRAYER TO CHRIST.

"The custom has been growing of publicly offering up, not occasional invocations, but whole prayers to the

Divine Son, sometimes to the entire forgetfulness of the Father as the object of worship. Devotional meetings are within our memory in which all the service—hymns, prayers, meditations—has had Christ as its direct object, the ineffable Divine being not once addressed. The propriety of this having been challenged, one correspondent has dealt with the criticism as if it implied Unitarian sentiment. This is not at all the case ; it is rather to emphasise that in the consciousness of Jesus Christ there was an object of adoration as well as a claim on the faith and worship of His people, and that this object of adoration is His Father and our Father, His God and our God, and to remind us that the revelation in Christ postulates the Revealed One and commands our deepest homage for Him, that some of our theologians would set us on interrogating this habit in devotion. In two remarkable papers in the 'Theological Review,' published last year, Dr. Grosart—whose retirement from the pastorate we regretfully notice—dealt with this subject. Dr. Grosart's orthodoxy, his profound evangelical feeling, are unquestionable ; the striking title of his papers, 'The Interception of Worship of Almighty God the Father,' may well suggest the impoverishment of Christian sentiment, and the danger to religious thought, which lurk in the apparent simplicity of this exclusive satisfaction with the man Christ Jesus in popular teaching and worship. The permanent consciousness of Christendom has been sound on this point. Spiritual excitement has justified, for it has demanded, the occasional direct invocation of Jesus Christ, and this could not have been had He not been regarded as a Divine One. So Thomas worshipped Him, and Stephen made invocation, and the adoration of the Lamb is a part of the Apocalyptic vision. So, too, the hymns of the church are rich in direct address to our Lord

Jesus Christ. But the habitual and deliberate prayer of the church has been ever offered to the Father ; it is He to whom children and converts are taught to pray ; religious feeling is not held to be consummated until it rests in Him. Probably we may see here at once the genesis and the peril of the habit about which the warning is uttered. It is not so much the orthodoxy as the sobriety of popular religion which is in danger. Excited spiritual feeling is preferred to well-balanced religious thought. It is precisely the kind of danger which a theologian would perceive, and which it is his function, as theologian, to point out ; the churches should be grateful for his warning instead of resenting it.

“Another question of a delicately personal but very important character was started at Bradford. In a meeting—which, unfortunately, was held at a time unfavourable to completely reporting it—where the ‘Indwelling Spirit and the Living Christ’ was the subject of discussion, two or three brethren were moved to declare their experience of Christ as a personal presence inspiring them, and that in their experience this was something more than the God-consciousness which is in all religion. Their simple and bold testimony was reverently received by all present, but some questioned the correctness of their interpretation of the experience. ‘Admitting the reality of the spiritual movement ; admitting, too, your correctness in associating it with your faith in the historic Christ, are we bound,’ it was asked, ‘to accept your interpretation that Christ, as a spiritual presence, was actually revealing Himself to you ?’ It is a question which, from its very nature, cannot receive a simple answer, ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’ The answer will vary according to the faith of him who gives it. The question, however, bears directly on that problem of authority in matters of religion which is ever the most important of

Christian inquiries, and which is now being so earnestly, wistfully canvassed. Two of our younger theologians have made a valuable contribution to the discussion. Professor Armitage pointed out that the experience referred to should not be separated from Christ's own promise of direct spiritual enlightenment; that in the cumulation of the two testimonies—Christ's recorded utterance, 'I will come,' and the utterance of men among us, 'I have experienced His coming'—the weight of the evidence is found.

"The Rev. P. T. Forsyth, in a review of Mr. Horton's 'Revelation and the Bible,' has said the same thing: 'If there be any test of revealed truth, it is not the Christian consciousness, but the truth's organic unity with the historic consciousness of Christ.' We record these utterances with great satisfaction. They breathe the spirit of the reformed theology, the Puritan theology, the theology of the Methodist revival. The day of constructive theological thought, for which many have been on the watch, seems now dawning."

MAETERLINCK.

In July Mrs. A. forwards to Dr. Mackennal a letter from Archdeacon Wilson in reply to one of hers about his book, "The Gospel of the Atonement." She asks if he has read Maeterlinck's "Wisdom and Destiny." She finds in him a non-Christian version of many things which Dr. Mackennal has taught her, and believes that in his writings, truth may find its way to many who cannot read the same truths in the words of Christ or of Paul, clear though they are to opened eyes. She adds some extracts from Maeterlinck with her own Christian version in brackets.

"21st July, 1899.

"... I am very much interested in what you have quoted from Maeterlinck. I have not read anything of his, but I shall read him now. Perhaps there is not so much difference between you and him as might appear.

You give a name to what for him remains unnamed. He must mean the deeper self, not the individual asserting self, but the responding, believing self submitting to the impulse of the great eternal, creative will. We see in that the Holy Spirit, and when we remember that the Holy Spirit is for ever proceeding from, and returning to, the Father and the Son, we have all the Christian directness and fulness of feeling combined with the Pantheist's largeness—even vagueness—of hope. I wonder if Maeterlinck, and those like him, would call us unconscious, incomplete Pantheists, as we call them unconscious, incomplete Christians. . . .”

THE GRACE OF THE HOLY COMMUNION.

In November Mrs. A. asks a series of questions suggested by reading four books, “*La Vie Dévote*,” of St. Francis de Sales, “*Les Lettres de Lacordaire aux Jeunes Gens*,” and the lives of Frank Crossley and Professor Drummond. She feels that through all four the very life of Christ unmistakably throbs and glows. Two of these attributed their Christian life to the daily Mass “whereby Christ feeds us in soul and body.” The other two saints were just as saintly without any Mass. It is not quite satisfying to say, “Christ responded to their real faith in Him unhindered by their superadded credulities”—that makes the nature of a man’s creed so immaterial. Faith does not create; it only appropriates. The great realities are objective, and independent of our sight and blindness. Is there then perhaps some great reality which the Puritan fails to avail himself of, and for want of which his spiritual life suffers? The Scottish and the American Episcopal liturgies retain words dropped from the English version at the Reformation—the invocation to the Holy Ghost “to make this bread the body of Christ,” &c. If there is a special grace to be had only in that particular way she must drag herself somehow to the Communion, even if it should make her ill afterwards.

She has been accustomed to think that if our mortal bodies are quickened or fashioned anew it is by the grace of Christ to our souls, and only as a secondary effect. The Mass assumes that His human body acts on our body. This is utterly remote from all the teachings of the New Testament except the sixth chapter of John, and there the words are strangely strong. She does not wonder when she reads

that chapter that Roman Catholics say Protestants are the Jews of this day for ever asking, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" But the Quakers—truly Christian saints—are the perpetual safeguard against the sacramentarian error.

"25th November, 1899.

"You hardly need, I am sure, that I should point out the fallacy involved in the claim that Christ's body, conceived of as the Romanists and High Anglicans conceive of it, is the nourishment of saints. The very fact that Frank Crossley and Henry Drummond were saints disposes of the whole claim. This is one of those cases, provided for in Bacon's 'Novum Organum,' in which a single negative destroys the assumption. We have to look for something in which St. Francis de Sales, Lacordaire, Crossley, and Drummond shared equally if we are to understand their saintship.

"Read carefully again the sixth chapter of John, and see whether the thing which confounded the Jews was not that Jesus should have assumed that His personality could do what He said. Compare your quoted verse 53 with 41 and 42. I do not find any trace in the Bible that either the words 'eat and drink' or 'flesh and blood' troubled the Jews. It is only our Western dunderheadedness which cannot see the metaphor, or our great daintiness, which likes fine, subtle, literary effects, but is offended by great, crude representations, that blunders here.

"It has been well said that the doctrine of the Mass demands, not a miracle, but an absurdity, a body without parts or accidents, an infinite body. You have only to conceive that the body has parts to be shocked at the questions which will arise, and a body without parts, what is that?

"It is quite true that the Puritan symbols retained much that English Nonconformists have lost sight of; and I am

interested to know that one such Scottish symbol retained words left out of the English. Don't you see why? For exactly the same reason that I can mix water with the wine while your High Church vicar cannot. The Puritans so decisively rejected all dogmas tampering with the 'substance' of the bread, and the body of Jesus, that they could safely use bold imaginative utterances of the spiritual reality.

"Note also here how St. Paul's use of the word body fluctuates in the Epistle to the Corinthians; now he speaks of Christ's body in connection with the bread and again in the same verse in connection with the whole Church. It would be impossible for your vicar, or anyone believing as he does, to do that.

"The difference between the Puritan and the modern Nonconformist conception of the Lord's Supper is, I think, this. The modern Nonconformist has regarded it as only a commemoration of Christ's sacrificial death, while the Puritan regarded it as a witness and symbol of the fact that the risen and glorified (human nature of) Christ can be the direct source and nourishment of a new divine life in the Church. The Nonconformist reduced the whole blessedness which Christ confers on His people to that change wrought psychologically and ethically by the belief of certain truths set forth in Him. The Puritan believed in a vital, transcendental, 'mystical' union between Christ and His Church, according to which the truths His people believed became natural to them, and the new ethical demands appeared as the expressions of their own renewed nature. It is very appropriate that a transcendental doctrine should be set forth in the symbol. But the doctrine is not dependent on the symbol; the blessedness is not suspended on the Sacrament. Hence Quakers and sick people, and those whose interpretation of

the rite is defective, may all be partakers of the body and blood in virtue of the fact that the Christ they believe in gives Himself to them.

“I certainly do not think that you ought to unfit yourself for duties that you may go to the Communion; at least that you ought habitually to do this. I am greatly mistaken if you do not sometimes find yourself even more truly one with the congregations having Communion because of the fact that you are staying at home in loyalty to the very Lord they meet to bring into their midst. You may have a sort of reserved sacrament in recognising that you are at home because you believe that God is saying to you, ‘Stay here.’”

Dr. Mackennal continued to correspond with Mrs. A. till within a few months of his death, but in subsequent letters there is more of the times and less of the eternities in the correspondence. Like many others, he was sorely wounded in spirit by the South African War, and the recrudescence of inhuman and unchristian sentiment which it brought. Some of the letters of this period will be found in other parts of this book; some deal with the education controversy, others with sermon notes which he was sending for Mrs. A.’s perusal; and others are personal.

The following extracts add something of definiteness to our knowledge of the writer’s character:—

“18th March, 1901.

“Your letter came a week ago, just when I was starting for Cardiff, for the National Council. I hope you saw that I was there, and understood my silence. There is always such a rush at these meetings; some day, perhaps, the leaders will understand that ‘in silence mightiest things are wrought.’ . . .

“I have come home tired, and the weary feeling is not new. My lectures for America have meant a great deal of work. Sometimes I catch myself listening for the footstep

which will tell me that my order of release has come. But I pull myself up, for I am still a strong man ; and so long as I am so, I have no right to give way to fatigue. Only I am learning to husband my powers more carefully. . . .'

"9th January, 1902.

" . . . I was very much struck with a speech from a friend, Mr. Halley Stewart, on Tuesday last. I was speaking of the reluctance of Hindoos to be baptised, and of the real faith which might lie under what the missionaries would call moral cowardice. Mr. S. replied, 'Perhaps they are all the better Christians for this reluctance ; they see too much into the heart of the matter.' I was grateful for the suggestion ; and it is true. . . ."

"2nd September, 1902.

" . . . I am finding myself forced out into the education fight. It has been a sore trial, but perhaps it may prove a benefit to me. 'Time was I shrank from what was right for fear of what was wrong.' I have had need to learn that there is great danger of spirituality lapsing into fastidiousness. . . ."

"23rd November, 1902.

"Here is something which perhaps may interest you if you can read it. I fear you may find it even more illegible than the last. The subject is 'The Service of the Impassioned.' It was not suggested by Price Hughes's death, but it was preached to-day, instead of being allowed more time to mature, because of that. . . ."

"4th October, 1903.

" . . . Harrogate has certainly done me good ; and I am feeling 'healthier' inwardly as well as outwardly for the rest and change and treatment. Hope is coming

back into my life. Physically I think I may live for many years; but the prospect has seemed to call for patient submission rather than awakened any spring. Now I have begun to gird up the loins of my mind, and have not to force myself to contemplate new service. . . .”

THE FILIAL PERSONALITY.

“26th February, 1904.

“Do you ever see the *Contemporary Review*? Have you read a paper in the December number ‘Some Sayings of Bishop Westcott?’ I got hold of it two days ago; and it strangely moved me. I have not read anything for a very long time with which I felt myself in so entire accord. I don’t know how it would appeal to you. I am afraid that some of it would appear to you very vague, and might come into antagonism with some conceptions, perhaps even mental habits, that seem part of your very self. But to me it seems to open up ‘broad fields of wealth unknown.’

“I have read Sabatier’s ‘Esquisse,’ and with very great pleasure. I lent it also to Mr. Hall, who was charmed with it. In reading it one ought to remember that it is ‘philosophy of religion’ he is dealing with, neither theology nor religious unfolding, if one may use such a word. I felt all that you suggest about the coldness, the restriction, of his treatment of Christ; but there is one phrase in your letter which seems to me to open up a larger prospect. It is that in which you say he gives us no suggestion ‘that Christ revealed God, except as the divine Fatherhood is implicated in His own Sonship.’ If he suggested to you such an implication, there must be an evangelical element in Sabatier much deeper and more real than I perceived when reading him. The implication of the divine Fatherhood in such a Sonship or consciousness of Sonship as that of

Christ would seem to me the very revelation of God. Indeed, it does so seem to me ; this is my main and most satisfying reason for believing Him divine.

“ I well remember the substance of what you quote me as having said a long time ago about the recurrence of moods of scepticism in advanced Christian life. I will tell you what I find in myself. The scepticism is of fear and fancy. It is the shudder which a thought of illimitable possibilities brings to me, and I rest upon reason, not reasoning, and am restored. The belief in God, and afterward the belief of Christ, the hope of immortality, whenever I am impelled to go back on rudimentary truths, these seem to me essentially rational. It is the denial of them that is baseless, the doubt of them which is visionary and emotional. When we come to draw deductions from our abiding faith, we are very likely to go astray ; there is an incertitude about these deductions which belongs to our want of confidence in our own fitness to deduce, but it does not attach to the eternal reason which assures us of the ultimate necessities. I think that is only another way of putting what you too have said : ‘ God answers the dumb appeal of our hearts ; we say, “ He knows—it is enough.” ’ . . . ”

CHAPTER XVIII

PUBLICATIONS

*“Did not he magnify the mind, show clear
Just what it all meant?”*—BROWNING.

IT was Dr. Mackennal's habit to carry on some line of New or Old Testament study at the same time as his ordinary pulpit work. When his special subject had ripened in his mind he would preach five or six sermons on it, often during the Advent season, leading up to the special commemoration of Christmas. The material of the sermons was then available for publication in book form, or as a series of addresses.

Among the publications which were in this way first given to his own people and afterwards to a wider public were :—“The Biblical Scheme of Nature and of Man,” “The Christian Testimony,” “The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia,” “The Kingdom of the Lord Jesus,” and “The Eternal God and the Human Sonship.”

The first of these is a masterly handling of a great theme—the Biblical theodicy. The four lectures of which the book is composed are :—(1) Creation and Rest; (2) Fall and Redemption; (3) Adam a Figure of Christ; (4) The Consummation of Human History. Since 1885 the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture has been repeatedly examined and restated, and now any view which recognises that holy men spake of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit is recognised as containing what is

essential in that doctrine ; but surely it required both courage and confidence to say twenty years ago :—

“ I have used the term ‘ legends of creation.’ That is all I ask of you, that you accept these early chapters in Genesis as legends, and then inquire what are the general conceptions of the world embodied in them ; what is their relation to the book of which they are the prologue. But let me add in all frankness, that, in my opinion, we can only use them as legends. They are not science ; they are not history. No attempts to reconcile the discrepancies between their statements and the record of the rocks, the history of the solar system, and the long procession of animal and vegetable life, seem to me other than evasions ; and I do not see that any future attempts at reconciliation are likely to be more satisfactory. . . . ”

“ The fact of progression from the less complex to the more complex soon strikes the observer of nature, as likewise does the fact that the organic world is dependent on the inorganic, and the animal kingdom as a whole on the vegetable kingdom as a whole. Whenever men reason on the phenomena of nature, they perceive such progress and dependence ; and these legends evince keen observation and careful thought. What is remarkable in them is, not a minute accuracy of detail anticipating subsequent discovery, but the absence of any pretence to such accuracy. There is about them a reserve, a dignity of poetic and spiritual thought, which makes any attempt to estimate their precise scientific value appear grotesque. . . . ”

This also is nobly said :—

“ There is no literature so profound in its tragedy, so keen in its pathos, as this Hebrew literature, for there is none in which God is so implicated. The Bible never represents the divine as remote from the human ; its heaven is no tranquil elevation : it is the judgment-seat, the home, the spiritual centre of earth. Now if you were hearing an oratorio of which you already knew the theme to be a troubled, agonising story of crime and folly, misery and sin, or restless passion and good often thwarted and beaten down, if the overture were soft and gentle, a symphony of rest, what would you say ? You would predict the termination from the overture ; you would be borne up, through all the lengthening discords, by the certainty that the end should be peaceful and triumphant and good. So when we read here ‘ God rested ’ we breathe and say, ‘ All is well.’ ”

Of all the books which came from Mackennal’s hand this is the one which contains most of the characteristic

features of his theological thinking. Man's relation to nature, sin's intrusion into the divine ordering of life, the dislocation of the divine ordination for humanity, and the consequences of sin on human life; its effect on man's relation to God; the vindication of the divine law of solidarity by turning it, through Jesus Christ, into the means of redemption; the nature of the relation between the believer and Christ, and the spiritual effects of faith; the fulfilment of the divine destiny and the final restoration of all men—these ideas, which recur in all Mackennal's work, are the substance of this little book, and they are set forth in distinguished literary form. The "*Spectator*" and other competent critics recognised at once that the book was a weighty and valuable one, and it went through several editions. Looking at it now, one can believe that with a less forbidding title it might have had popular success in the best sense of the term. Perhaps it argues a certain noble ignorance of, or indifference to, the faculties of the general reader, to publish a book, not technically theological, under such a title.

"The Christian Testimony" is a series of addresses dealing with popular agnosticism. The lectures are:—
(1) Agnosticism, Sceptical and Christian; (2) The Gospel Record, its History; (3) The Gospel Record, its Contents; (4) The Christian Consciousness.

The argument is throughout modern, well knit, well sustained, and elevated in thought and feeling; but the remarkable thing to anyone now reading the lectures is to find the use made of the testimony of the Christian consciousness, to which more recent thought has so persistently recurred. Dr. Mackennal's use of the argument is cautious, scientific, and effective. Two quotations may serve:—

"Distinguish between these two notions: the notion that the Christian ideas have rooted themselves in the religious consciousness

of humanity and the notion that Christianity is a natural outcome, a development, of the religious consciousness of humanity. The adaptation of the Gospel to the instincts and needs of the human soul has always been a favourite and powerful argument with defenders of the Christian faith. It is evidenced by the complete displacement of European paganism, and the precious fruits of Christianity in the advancement and benignity of European civilisation. We see the Gospel in our own day, by the response which it awakens in the deepest heart of man, overcoming various forms of heathenism in the mission fields. At this very time not only has Hindoo superstition fallen, the Christian teachings concerning God and the great ethical ideas of the Gospel are forming the new life of our Indian empire. Even the unbelief of England is deeply pervaded by Christian thought ; it borrows its philanthropic purpose and spiritual aspiration from the Gospel. But to say this is totally different from saying that the heart of man gave these influences birth ; the origin of the religious ideas with which is the future of the world can be traced to a prevalent Christianity ; from the facts which the Gospel declares these ideas sprang.

“ Let me illustrate this distinction by a familiar fact. The larch is now-a-days a characteristic English tree. We find it everywhere. It grows in the back rows of our shrubberies ; it rises in our hedges ; in woods it stunts and dwarfs and kills out saplings of oak, and elm, and alder. It stands in copses a cover for foxes or for game ; it clothes our hillsides ; it is thoroughly at home on British soil. And yet, if you refer to any book of the ‘ British Flora,’ you will not find the larch mentioned. The reason is, because the larch is not of native growth. We know the history of its introduction. In 1727, four slips were given to the Duke of Athole ; two of them were planted in his grounds at Dunkeld, two were given by him to a friend, and from that time it has spread until it has become one of the commonest features of our landscape. The larch is rooted ineradicably on British ground, but it is not a product of British ground ; the soil of Britain is adapted to it, but the soil of Britain did not develop it. So, too, the Gospel is adapted to the soul of man ; it has found its home in human consciousness : but it has been brought to man ; it is no outcome of his nature, although it has so firmly rooted itself in his nature. Remember this distinction, I pray you ; it will save you from many a fallacious interpretation of the facts of man’s religious history. . . . ”

“ A large amount of indifference to the Gospel proceeds from ignorance of the Christian consciousness. Christianity is emphatically a life, with inner sources as well as an external history ; and

the history cannot be understood without a knowledge of its relations to the internal Christian life. Nor can the doctrines of the Gospel possibly be appreciated while men contemptuously ignore the mode in which Christians themselves conceive them.

"A remarkable illustration of misapprehension, arising from this source, was given us a few years ago. A proposal was made of a practical test of the efficiency of prayer in the relief of sickness ; it is understood to have proceeded from Sir Henry Thompson, and it was commended to the public by a few prefatory words from Professor Tyndall, each of those men being of the highest reputation in his own department of science. The proposal was to assign one ward in a hospital to patients who should be prayed for, and another to patients who should not ; and the results of cure in the one case and in the other should be reported. The suggestion was apparently made in good faith by its proposers, who could hardly have anticipated how monstrous it would appear to all Christians. These were shocked, first, by the cynicism of the proposal, as if men who had gained a sense of the value of human life from Jesus of Nazareth, and who drew from Him a perennial sympathy with suffering, would ever consent to doom any number of afflicted persons to exclusion from an interest in their prayers. The experiment would have been vitiated from the first by this fact ; the publication of its terms would immediately have enlisted on behalf of those not to be prayed for the special compassion and the earnest supplications of thousands resenting so cruel an experiment. Christians were shocked, secondly, by the impiety of the proposal. Prayer is the utterance of faith, and this was a suggestion of unbelief. Faith dictates no terms to God ; it waits on Him submissive to His will. Faith is no process of curious experimenting ; it is a habit of dependence on God, the casting all our care on Him who careth for us. The proposal, lastly, exhibits complete ignorance of what prayer is in the purpose and experience of praying men. It is not for us to determine beforehand what we will, and what we will not, persist in asking. In a very lofty sense, the words of Paul are true, '*We know not what we shall pray for ; the Spirit maketh intercession for us.*' In the act of praying we are taught what to ask for and how to ask. Desires we intended to utter die into silence, and things we did not design to beseech become objects of our supplication. The judgment becomes cleared ; impulses are awakened in us ; things are revealed to us which we grasp rather than wait for. [Prayer is frank, spontaneous ; it is communion with God. He talks with us while we talk with Him ; it is contrary to all our experience in praying that we should come self-bound, and seeking to bind God, by our predeterminations.

last

"I can anticipate an objection that may be taken to the treatment of the Christian consciousness as the evidence of experts. It may be said, 'The experience of Christians is contradicted by the experience of unbelievers. All down the course of Christian history there have been unbelievers, men whose consciousness is in opposition to that of Christians ; the one experience neutralises the other.' Let me point out a fallacy here. One experiment, one experience, cannot contradict another unless the forces investigated, and the conditions of the investigation, are the same. The unbeliever has not a consciousness contradictory to that of the man of faith ; he has no experience of faith at all. That the result of his non-faith should be widely different from the results of the faith of the Christian is not only consistent with, it is confirmatory of, the Christian consciousness. You cannot proclaim the faith of the Gospel to be a delusion on the ground that those who disbelieve the Gospel have no consciousness answering to that of believers in it."

Of Dr. Mackennal's expository work the "Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia" is the best known specimen and it is on the whole the best. Its diagnosis of the conditions of modern church life and its application of the ancient message to modern needs gives it a value all its own.

The little volume entitled "The Kingdom of the Lord Jesus" contains the Advent sermons preached during the season of trial and heart-searching which fell upon the nation at the end of 1899, together with a sermon preached on New Year Sunday, 1900. Of the many endeavours to turn the disasters of those dark days to spiritual profit, none were wiser or saner than these. There is no flaunting or aggressive denunciation, no twisting of texts to give a superficial application to the needs of a moment, only a deep and sorrowful recognition that peace is one of "the fruits of the Spirit," that it cannot be had on any other terms, and that the habit and temper of national life, even of much religious advocacy and of many church methods, are so far from being fruits of the Spirit that they cherish and foster the very instincts out of which wars "inevitably" come. The book deals with the Subject,

the Method, the Propagandism, and the Universality of the Kingdom, and with the Christian Patriot and the War.

“The Eternal Son of God and the Human Sonship,” the last book published by Mackennal, was intended to be one of several in which he had planned to give the last results of his spiritual intuitions and life-long processes of thought to his own public. The sermons work round the subjects of permanent fascination to the Christian mind, such as “The Incarnation,” “The Human Sonship,” “The Imitation of Christ,” “Christ’s Insight of Men,” “Christian Holiness,” “The Exaltation of Jesus.” They bear constant testimony to the increasing vividness of spiritual apprehension which is the reward of years of saintly living, and repeatedly suggest how easily to eyes like these the veil may be drawn aside which divides the material from the spiritual kingdom.

These books together with the two already mentioned, “Christ’s Healing Touch” and “The Life of Christian Consecration,” contain all the sermons published by Mackennal in book form. There were others preached on special occasions, such as the admirable address on the life of Queen Victoria, and several memorial sermons, which were published in pamphlet form. Much of his pulpit work was strictly expository, and probably many sermons supplied the material of his expository articles in the *Homiletic Magazine*, the *Evangelical*, and the *Congregational Magazine*, which contain work of a very high order, scholarly and cautious, rich in illustration and imagination, and profound in spiritual insight.

In addition to these, the following sermons were published in the *Christian World Pulpit* :—

Vol.	Date.
5.	1874, June 24th.
	“The Need and the Method of Spiritual Revival.”

Vol. 8. 1875.

10. 1876, Nov. 22nd.
 14. 1878, Nov. 20th.
 26. 1884, Oct. 15th.
 27. 1885, Jan. 28th.
 31. 1887, May 25th.
 32. " Aug. 17th.
 " " Sept. 14th.
 " " Nov. 2nd.
 " " Nov. 16th.
 33. 1888, Feb. 1st.
 " " Feb. 29th.
 36. 1889, July 3rd.
 " " Dec. 11th.
 39. 1891, June 17th.
 49. 1896, April 15th.
 55. 1899, Feb. 8th.
 57. 1900, Jan. 17th.
 " " Mar. 14th.
 59. 1901, Feb. 6th.

[The sermons afterwards published in the volume "Life of Christian Consecration" were published in September, October, and November of this year.]

“The Unity of the Church of Christ.”
“Political and Social Ungodliness.”
“The Worth of Man” (Congregational Union Sermon, City Temple).
“Human Changes and the Divine Unchangeableness.”
“The World for Christ.”
“The Omnipresent God.”
“Peace in Christ Jesus.”
“The Christian Confidence.”
“The Wasted Weeks of Sickness.”
“Christ and the Law.”
“The Death of Moses.”
“The Discipline of Temptation.”
“The Word made Flesh.”
“The Living Christ’s Demands.”
“England’s Accepted Time.”
“Sacrifice in Service.”
“The Christian Patriot and the War.”
“The Times of the Nations.”
“Memorial Sermon: The Late Queen Victoria.”

Some of Dr. Mackennal's best literary work was done in the field of history. He was, in the proper sense of the word, a historical student, interested, that is, not merely in the record of movements and events in the past, but with a passion for getting to the original sources, and laying bare the streamlets of fact and tendency which issued in the substantial flood of event.

Among his papers are quantities of materials from English and American libraries collected for his books, but sufficient to make the substance of as many more. Some of his work on the origins of English Free Church history is unrivalled for its combination of historical

accuracy and philosophical judgment as to the relative value of persons and movements.

In 1888 a lecture was published covering the history of English Free Churches from the Act of Toleration down to the death of John Wesley. It contains some interesting points of view, and concludes with a note which was to become more dominant :—

“ May we not hope that, as God in His providence, by giving the different churches freedom of development, has allowed us to see what each of them can do in virtue of its formative idea, and each through the incompleteness of its method is failing to accomplish, there shall be a flowing together of all the currents of national Christianity, and a healing of divisions ? National Christianity, I say, for words are tolerable when we think of the nation as a free people which are not tolerable when we identify the nation with the Government. The virtue of the Act of Toleration was, not in the things which it permitted, but in the tolerant spirit which it so feebly expressed, and which has since so irresistibly developed. The tolerant temper recognises the unity of Christian sentiment and purpose which underlies all our divisions, a unity which man can neither make nor unmake, because it is in Christ and in His people. Must this unity be for ever a thing of faith and not of sight ? It surely cannot always remain a unity underlying division ; it must work toward and accomplish union. That is the hope I cherish, the hope I will never resign. It was the yearning of the wise and godly of all parties in the past two centuries of our history ; it is the sanguine expectation of to-day. It is a divinely awakened anticipation, and He who inspired it will assuredly bring it to pass.”

In 1893, at the request of the Congregational Union, Dr. Mackennal published “ The Story of the English Separatists.” The elementary series in which the book appeared has prevented it from receiving full justice as a contribution to the history of the churches in Elizabethan days. It was characteristic of the author that, though he was invited to produce a book for beginners, he gave them his best, took abundant pains, and furnished his readers with a historical *apparatus criticus* :—

“ It is with the object of stimulating young students to take up

this subject for thorough investigation that the formal arrangement of this little book has been adopted. The apparatus of side and foot notes may appear too ambitious for so slight a work; it is intended to guide beginners until they are fairly entered upon their task, when they will make their way for themselves. Though I have made a good deal of use of the sources, I have given references whenever I could to the modern books in which they are quoted, because these books will be at first more attainable. I have always had some special reason for giving a reference to the source in addition to, or instead of, a reference to the quotation of it in a modern volume. I have also had some special reason for adhering, in a few cases, to the primitive spelling; for the most part I have given modern orthography.

“Should this book induce advocates of opposing church theories to make an independent study of Separatist literature, so much the better. Controversy is abated, not inflamed, in its intensity, through a fuller understanding of one another by the controversialists. I believe that Presbyterians and Congregationalists particularly, the modern representatives of Puritans and Separatists, will learn, by reference to the sixteenth century, that their controversy has nearly worn itself out; and that Robinson’s prediction, that they would come to find themselves in substantial agreement, is on the eve of fulfilment in the New England on both sides of the Atlantic. ‘*Iræ amantium redintegratio amoris.*’”

“The Homes and Haunts of the Pilgrim Fathers” embodies the notes and observations made on a tour in 1896, when Dr. Mackennal acted as conductor to a party of New England ministers and others interested in the origins of ecclesiastical and civil freedom. After visiting the points of interest in the eastern counties they went to Holland; the following account of their proceedings is from the recollection of one of the party, the Rev. E. J. Dukes, of Kentish Town:—

“In July, 1896, a party of forty-six American Congregationalists who had been on pilgrimage to the English haunts of the Pilgrim Fathers, went over to Holland to visit the scenes connected with the exile of the early witnesses for civil and religious liberty. Among them were several lineal descendants of the men who had suffered for the faith, notably the Rev. W. A. Robinson, D.D., of Middletown, New York, a descendant of John Robinson.

“Dr. Mackennal accompanied this party, as he desired to search out certain obscure places on the Zuyder Zee, where Johnson’s party had first settled before being moved on by the authorities to Amsterdam. He had been chairman of the committee which was influential in making the pilgrim tour in England a success. The Americans regarded him, therefore, as a kind of chaperon.

“Sunday, July 5th, was spent at Leyden, where the exiles found asylum for eleven years. We worshipped at St. Peter’s in the morning. Vast as the building is, our little company formed the bulk of the congregation. It may be mentioned as a coincidence that the mystery as to John Robinson’s interment was solved about the time of this ‘pilgrimage.’ The name of Johannes Robinson, *Englischer Prediger*, was discovered in the list of persons interred in a common grave within the cathedral church. The custom was for very poor persons to be buried in this ecclesiastical pit, which was calculated to hold twenty-four coffins. When it was full the tenants of the temporary lodging provided by the parish were turned out into some unregistered grave in the country. Such was the crowning-point in the martyrdom of the English exile. ‘No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.’

“Only a few yards away is the entrance to the almshouse for French people, which stands upon the site of the house where John Robinson ‘lived, taught and died,’ to quote the tablet on the outer wall of St. Peter’s opposite. Robinson died in 1625, and in 1666 the house was acquired for its present purpose. In the Board room on the first floor, we met on Sunday afternoon. Up the steep staircase we climbed to the small and stuffy little chamber, which was hot and crowded to excess as we stood in a double row around the walls, there being no seats. Dr. Mackennal gave the address, Dr. Robinson offered prayer, and the service closed with the singing of the American hymn,

‘My country, ‘tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty.’

to the tune of the English National Anthem.

“Taking as his text the words, ‘*We have this treasure in earthen vessels*,’ Dr. Mackennal spoke of (1) The transfiguring power of the Gospel; (2) its transforming power; coming (3) to the transcendent power with which it accomplishes its work in the lives of men who seek at all costs to be faithful to conscience and to God. The analysis of the character of Robinson was made with the sympathy, insight and fulness of knowledge which were worthy of the occasion.

Those who knew Dr. Mackennal can easily recall the tones in which he concluded his address with the lines,

‘ Great God, beneath Thy guiding Hand,
Our exiled fathers crossed the sea,
And, as they trod the wintry strand,
With prayer and psalm they worshipped Thee.

Laws, freedom, truth and faith in God
Came with those exiles o'er the wave,
And where they rest beneath the sod
The God they trusted guards their grave.’

“ Dr. Mackennal visited several villages at the south end of the Zuyder Zee, where companies of the exiles settled for a time, then, desolate and impoverished moved on, finding no room because every inhabitant had his own work to do, and no more labourers were needed. But his greatest delight was in a visit to the Brownist meeting-room in the Bardesteeg, in Amsterdam. Pictures of the entrance to the street have been made familiar in various historical accounts of the Congregational exiles. Halfway down a narrow court a door in the wall admits to a rude ladder-staircase. On the first floor is a large chamber, capable of seating about one hundred and fifty persons. The roof is low, the floor unsafe, especially as it supports a large collection of ancient furniture of little value. But to Dr. Mackennal, Dr. Robinson, and the writer, who found the place after some difficulty, it was a shrine hallowed by memories of the most sacred kind. For here Francis Johnson, the first pastor, a ‘single young man and very studious,’ tried to live on ‘ninetepence a week, subsisting on boiled roots.’ Associated with him as teacher was Henry Ainsworth, of whom Bradford said there was ‘not his better for the Hebrew tongue in the university, nor scarce in Europe.’

“ It was through researches such as these that the Doctor was able during the next year or two to give the graphic touch to his descriptions of the Congregational exiles. He had acquired so intimate a knowledge of their history that he talked of them as if he had been one of their number. All his conversation was quiet and businesslike as usual, but the impassive manner yielded to flashes of enthusiasm when he stood where men had worshipped God, amid hazard and affliction, three hundred years ago.”

The “ Homes and Haunts of the Pilgrim Fathers,” for which this elaborate preparation was made, is a sumptuous

volume, with beautiful illustrations by Mr. Charles Whymper. It follows the Pilgrim church from its rise in Gainsborough and Scrooby ; gives an account of Austerfield, the home of Governor Bradford ; of the Standish country from which Myles Standish came, and of Boston, Cambridge and Wisbech in the early seventeenth century ; it follows the Pilgrims to Holland, describes the steps which led to the founding of the colony beyond the seas, and the departures from Delfshaven and Plymouth. It is the most accurate topographical record of the wanderings of the Pilgrims, and has many vivid and sympathetic touches which could only come from one who has lived with the men about whom he writes. It is indeed a more solid piece of work than its drawing-room-table appearance leads a reader to expect.

Of the historical books which came from Mackennal's pen the "Evolution of Congregationalism" is the one into which he put most serious work and mature thought. He was invited by the authorities of the Hartford Theological College in Connecticut to deliver the Carew Lecture in 1901, a lecture founded to enable "occasional instruction" by some special lecturer to be given to the students. His subject was a happy selection—"The Spiritual Forces and Conditions which have made English Congregationalism what it is to-day." No man was better fitted to deal with the subject than Mackennal, with his double qualification of accurate historical knowledge, and wide personal acquaintance with the currents of religious thought and feeling which he had been breasting for forty years.

There are six lectures :—

1. The Problem of the English Reformation.
2. Congregationalism before Robert Browne.
3. Presbyterians and Independents.

4. Reactions and Revival.
5. Congregationalists and Anglicans.
6. Seventeenth Century Independents and Twentieth Century Congregationalists.

The lectures have abundant charm in reading, and must have been delightful to hear. There is the wealth of incident, knowledge of personalities, and power of bringing out the historical or religious significance of a personality or an incident, which are needed in the best kind of historical writing ; and which, in a book so easily written and read as this, capture the attention and compel admiration. It has breadth of view, critical judgment, human interest, religious insight and prophetic outlook. The last chapter, which endeavours to estimate the effects of the historic subdivisions of English Christianity, and to look forward to an ultimate reunion, is a noble vindication of the truth that "no man is wiser than destiny." It breathes the spirit of the noble tolerance which springs from a catholic habit of appreciation, and a magnanimity which is born of watching God's ways with men that it may justify God's ways to men. Though the book when published was recognised by the *British Weekly* and a few other papers in adequate terms, Dr. Mackennal was himself disappointed to find that most of the notices of the book were written by reviewers quite ignorant of the religious history of England, who had no perception of the points of the book which made it a contribution to that history, and with no standards of comparison. He felt that the importance necessarily attached to book notices written largely by young and inexperienced men, who gathered their acquaintance with a subject from the book they were reviewing, was a serious hindrance to the public in the endeavour to discover the relative value of books.

The following letter in Dr. Parker's largest hand indicates that this volume had in him an appreciative reader ; it refers also to the movement for a new constitution of the Congregational Union.

"20th November, 1901.

"I have read your 'Evolution' with delighted interest. 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' I have been working at this thing now for a long time, and the longer I look the brighter it becomes. It is right ; it is sound in reason, and it is in harmony with our history. Your conversion is not yet quite complete so far as the word 'Church' is concerned. Thoroughly safeguard our local and individual autonomy, and we need have no fear of the word. It is scriptural, convenient and quotable. If the word 'Churches' be preferred by an overwhelming vote, so be it ; let both names be sent down for discussion. Though personally convinced that the word Church is right, I am willing that the alternative word 'Churches' should be sent down for discussion. 'Church' points in the right direction. It will little by little vindicate itself even to the most Congregational mind. I have not the shadow of a doubt that it is the right word, and will make for itself a large number of friends. I write in great haste, and in much weakness, but I thought I must drop you a line in appreciation of your most valuable lectures.

Dr. Mackennal's life of my father — Dr. J. A. Macfadyen, of Manchester—is remarkable as an appreciation of a man whose temperament, habits, and ideals of the ministry were so unlike his own. The life of a man who gave himself to others, with no thought for himself, and who devoted great powers to working denominational institutions, is not easily written. Much of his work is done for the moment, at white heat, and is not suitable for publication. My father was an influence, a force, a spirit, and an energy in Manchester, in Lancashire, and in the Congregational churches of England. When he died it seemed very doubtful if anyone could catch and crystallise the influence sufficiently to describe it in a book. When Dr. Mackennal undertook the book, we knew that the work would be done well, but I have often wondered since

that it was done so well. The book is more than a record of a finished life, it is one of the best treatises on "pastoral theology," and is a remarkable vindication of the type of ministry which it records. It is one of the few books which sets the whole pastoral and organising work of the ministry in its true light, as a form of Christian self-oblation; and it has the merit of bringing out the much-neglected fact that it is this self-oblation in the leader which makes a pastorate creative of like-minded personalities. Fifty such men in any generation would change the history of the church, or indeed of the country, they serve.

There are many scattered memorials of Dr. Mackennal's literary activity, besides the publications in book form. Mention has already been made of a series of sonnets published during the Leicester period, and collected for publication by one of his friends. They, with others, published and in manuscript, point to a vein of poetic feeling and impulse which came to the surface at intervals all through his life. The spiritual yearning of his nature, his idealism, his true sense of beauty in living things, and his sense of literary form, all sought expression in this way; but he either lacked or lost poetic passion and imaginative vividness, so that while the heart mused and the poetic fire burned, it fell short of breaking into flame and emitting its own heat and light. His sonnets are musings and meditations in a verse form rather than poems in the strict sense of the term.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN FOR CHILDREN.

*On our happy Christmas day
We, Thy children, meet to pray;
Leave we now our sports awhile,
Seek we now our Saviour's smile.*

*Gentle Jesus, Saviour mild !
Thou wast once a little child ;
Thou didst pray and Thou didst sing ;
Now Thou art our heavenly King.*

*Thou dost know what children want,
And what we require wilt grant ;
Son of earthly mother, Thou
Hearkest to children now.*

*What Thou wast when living here,
We would be, O Saviour dear ;
True in word, and kind in deed,
Thoughtful for each other's need.*

*Brave of heart and wise of head,
We the heavenly way would tread ;
We would serve our Father, too,
Just as those in heaven do.*

*Tender Saviour, Lord of all !
Let Thy peace upon us fall ;
Make us Thine, we humbly pray,
On our happy Christmas day.*

LOSS AND GAIN.

*The path of glory is the way to death ;
On every height that human feet can tread,
There lie the thick-strewn ashes of the dead
Who hither came, and here resigned their breath,
Their work unwrought. Ambition perisheth
In view of human weakness, human pains :
“ What use in toil ? ” the weary heart complains.
O heart, yet hear thou what the Master saith—
“ Who seeks his own shall lose his all ; ” who gives
Himself to ends earth cannot compass, he
Shall know no loss ; in gratitude and love,
A holier shrine than fame’s, his memory lives ;
His work advancing other eyes shall see,
The while he sojourns with the souls above.*

REST.

*Methought the Master said—“Come rest awhile
 And I prepared to follow. Visions rose
 Of sweeps of sand stretch’d in profound repose
 Of palm trees beck’ning to some desert isle,
 Of crumbling temples on the shore of Nile ;
 A bald-topp’d hill without a city gate,
 The garden hallow’d by the Saviour’s strait,
 And the lov’d lake that’s haunted by His smile.
 He gave me rest : a length of desert days,
 Wherein He said—“Lie still, my child, and bear.”
 Glimpses I caught of Truth’s majestic fane.
 Fair forms of saints, alive and dead, were there.
 He led my weary feet in quiet ways,
 By streams that glad the Holy Land of Pain.*

A. M.

THE FORSAKEN CROSS.

*“Tears clear the sight,” I said in pride of grief :
 The wise have always learned in sorrow’s school ;
 And in my scorn I deemed the man a fool
 Who talks of happiness ; “a respite brief
 Is all the brave accept, no long relief.”
 I was the fool ; I knew not that my eye
 Was blinded with the tears I would not dry.
 I sought the Cross to gaze upon the Chief
 Of them who suffer ; but the Cross was bare,
 And to my wondering heart these words were borne,
 “He is not here, but risen into His joy.”
 Dear Lord, forgive my pride, forgive my scorn ;
 The happy angels go on Thine employ,
 And Christ-like grief, for Christ-like joys prepare.*

A. M.

CHAPTER XIX

LETTERS TO MRS. NAIRN

*“I had but letters,—
Only knew his actions by hearsay,
He himself was busied with my betters;
What of that? My turn must come some day.”*

BROWNING.

DR. MACKENNAL had a remarkable faculty for reviving old friendships, and taking them up after a period of separation, as though no time had intervened. An illustration of this was the revival of his friendship with Mrs. Nairn, of Edinburgh, sister of Dr. John Ker, of Glasgow, his minister and helper in student days. Some of his letters are as graceful as they are gracious.

“16th April, 1898.

“You are good enough to write very kindly to a poor correspondent. . . . But I am not really neglectful—that is, I do not fail in gratitude and affection. I daresay you understand how much ‘better’ is ‘the old’—old books, old scenes, old friends. And I should be untrue to my better self if I failed in grateful remembrance of Armfield Place. The cordial welcome I always had from you, and the bright talk, and the intercourse with your brother, they were part of my education. I shall leave behind me for my children to read, a letter which your brother sent me, when he forwarded a letter recommending me to the committee of Hackney College. In it he urges me to be always giving up myself to the Master, ‘and you,’ he adds, ‘will receive a new and better self, even Christ in you.’ Is not that good and worth remembering?

“I did, for a little, hope to be in Edinburgh in a

fortnight, when I meant to bring my wife to see you. My brother-in-law is to be married on the 27th, in Glasgow. I find I must go on at once to Glasgow, but my wife goes to Edinburgh to stay with a niece. I think she will call on you. If she does, will you kindly receive her downstairs? She has a heart trouble, and does not walk upstairs. Happily, she has a strong son, who can carry her as easily as she once carried him; and without that twinge of apprehension and wonder about the future, which so enhances, while it mingles, with a parent's fondest hope. Again, happily, the hope has been fulfilled, not the foreboding. . . .

"You are so good as to ask me about books. I have Dr. Forrest's book ('The Christ of History and of Experience') which you sent me last year. Dr. Fairbairn sent me 'Dr. Cairns's Life,' and I greatly enjoyed it—an evangelical Thomas Carlyle. There is a little book by Dr. Orr—I forget the title—'Neglected Factors in Early Church History,' or something like that. I should be glad to have it, for it suggests a matter on which I have had 'thoughts o' my ain' lately. I fancy that there must have been an immense leavening of the Roman Empire with Christian ideas on the part of many unrecognised as Christians. I think that unconfessed Christians—military and civil officers, their wives and servants—must have brought the gospel into Britain. And the whole subject is interesting, because the same sort of thing is going on in India to-day. If Dr. Orr, with his large learning, can help me to clear views of this matter, I shall be glad. But while I say this, I would rather have a friend's choice of a book than make my own choice.

"I hope you are better. The spring is very tardy, but it is here. May you and yours have the spring-time of the soul."

"16th May, 1899.

"The volume of our 'Free Church Council Proceedings' is out, and I have much pleasure in sending you a copy. It is a larger volume than we have yet issued, and I think you will find it as interesting as any which have gone before. Our next council will probably not be quite after the fashion of the last; we shall not have so many papers, but allow more time for free discussion. We have not yet discovered how to unite the freedom of the Presbyterian and Methodist church courts and the more demonstrative speaking of our assemblies. Probably we never shall.

"I was very glad my wife was able to call on you. She has not yet returned from Scotland. I went with her to Wemyss Bay for three days after my brother-in-law's wedding, and left her there. It has done her good. She is to return this evening. I heard one of your ministers on the Sunday. It was a strong sermon, but not very elegant; and it was neither doctrinal nor expository, but ethical, with a strong leaning to Christian socialism. I was much interested, and profited too. It was good to have an unselfish scheme of life so vigorously commended, and he never failed to appeal to the evangelical motive.

"I must thank you, too, for the two volumes by Dr. Orr. The one on 'Early Church History' I read at Skelmorlie, and much enjoyed it. The Ritschlian volume I am keeping for a quiet day.

"I see my old friend John Robson is moderator of your synod. I shall be looking out for Joseph Corbett's nomination next. It must be a great gratification to you to see the lad you watched over so sedulously so useful a man, and all without losing any of his old simplicity of character."

"19th March, 1900.

"The book came in due course ('Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament'); I have only just looked into it. I was not surprised to read what your minister said about it; it is quite right that persons who are qualified by intelligence and character should express their fears. The whole question is most difficult, and until we are more familiar than most of us are with the new thought, and all that it involves, we cannot form a positive judgment. It is quite true that the whole Christian theology will be profoundly affected if the critical views of the Old Testament shall be established. But the fact that men like Robertson Smith and Dr. George Adam Smith keep their evangelical faith encourages us to believe that there are conservative as well as destructive forces in the new thinking. I am struck with the overwhelming value of the Old Testament literature which the criticism reveals; that thoughts of such reach and depth and spirituality and force should have sprung up in the Jewish nation and laid hold of the nation is of enormous significance. Christ remains not only the mightiest personality in the world's history, but an absolutely unique personality, and His direct power on the human heart to-day is as great, as conspicuous, as it ever was. Christ to you and to me remains Lord, Saviour, the incarnation of God; nay, more, the incarnated eternal Son of God, of one substance with the Father. If we are led to another conception of God in history than that we have hitherto held; if we think of Him as immanent in life and nationality, and not simply as regnant over history, we shall understand perhaps better, and feel more deeply the significance of the election of Israel to be the medium of the revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ, and of the training of men to receive that revelation.

"The Cardiff meetings were very powerful, and the simultaneous mission has been a great quickening; perhaps rather the manifestation and outcome of a great spiritual uplifting which has been silently at work for many years. I am longing to see the common Christian life everywhere, manifestly obeying the law of Christ—non-resistance, stewardship, a thought for others rather than of self—in short, 'a partaking of the divine nature.' Then, I hope, we should reach the outsiders by direct touch of soul on soul, and our preaching would work from that, as well as work towards it." *

"12th April, 1900.

"The report of proceedings of the Free Church Council will be out soon, and I will see that you get a copy. It is like your kindness to offer me a book in return, and I feel like the man in Homer—I always get golden armour from you in return for copper. I accept it heartily for the affection which prompts the gift. I should like Prof. Salmond's 'Immortality.'"

"26th May, 1900.

"Here is my little book out at last ('The Kingdom of the Lord Jesus'), and I offer you an early copy. I was much interested in the account of the closing hours of the United Presbyterian Synod. One is tempted to add a word of regret that they should be closing hours—as if we could keep the youth while we enjoy the growing to maturity.

*'The man would be a boy again,
And yet a father too.'*

"I don't think your criticisms on my temperance sermon really affect my position, although they suggest doubts as to the propriety of my expression. I quite believe that

* A letter which in chronological order should be inserted here will be found among the letters on the Peace question (p. 260).

even moderate habitual use of stimulants is bad for the health, but I also believe that there is something in the physiological action of wine or beer, or even spirits, which renders them occasionally useful, and which is not explained away when we are learnedly told that alcohol is not a food, that it depresses temperature, &c. The value of such statements only an expert can understand, and the puffed-upness of enthusiasts who have learnt their science at public lectures is an injury to a good cause as well as an irritation to those who know that truth is not one-sided.

With respect to the other matter, I should say that, while personal action begins in individuality, it is ever seeking to go beyond it. The human personality emphatically is never complete, it is always seeking more and more to identify itself with others. In my sermon, however, it was not the philosophy of the matter I had in view, but the practical conclusion that, while it is my own conviction, impulses and heart which must guide me, I am selfish if the motives impelling me are supremely care for myself. I am tolerably certain you will not condemn that belief."

"24th Dec., 1901.

"You are getting a Christmas card from me; I send you also a written line of affectionate remembrance. I include also your husband, and your two dear daughters, to whom I would send my love if they were English girls. I am not quite sure how far I may venture with the daughters of the North, but I am quite prepared to love them on better acquaintance for their own sakes, as well as for yours.

"I hope the divine gifts—peace, love, joy, hope, holiness—will all be in your household abundantly.

"It was very kind of you to send me Mr. Carnegie Simpson's book, 'The Fact of Christ.' I have not yet

read it, but I shall read it with interest. I think I have met him, at the induction here in Bowdon of Mr. Gray, and I know his brother-in-law, Professor Mackintosh, very well. I daresay, like you, I may find the book too apologetic, but that is a young man's characteristic. We should hardly be gratified, and we might be a little suspicious, if we found young people attaching the same importance to Christian experience that we older people see, and feel, in it. Happily they have history to sustain faith till the years shall have strengthened and ripened it."

"13th Feb., 1903.

"... It is very good of you again to offer me a book. I always welcome what you choose for me. Of Dr. Forrest's book I have a very high opinion. I have read Douglas Mackenzie's life of his father, and what Dr. Smith says of it is true. It is a fine book. There are three of which I have seen notices, and any one of them, I am sure, would be interesting. There is Dr. Walter C. Smith's new complete volume of his poems; there is Overton's 'Lives of the Nonjurors'; and there is 'Famous Hymns and their Authors,' by Francis Arthur Jones. . . ."

7th July, 1903.

"First let me express my sincere and deep sympathy with you in your anxiety about Mr. Nairn. When I last saw him in Edinburgh I was struck with the change in him. The loss of memory was painful, but I was equally struck with the beautiful spirit he manifested, the care with which he concealed the fact that he had no vivid remembrance of me, and the fine courtesy with which he tried to direct the conversation along lines which we could both follow. I do not know anything which testifies more really to the sanctifying grace of Christ than the endurance

of Christian character when mental powers are failing. It is a manifest token of the life eternal ; already we see that the true man survives the bodily decay, and are encouraged in the hope that it may survive the dissolution of the body.

“I pray for you and your dear daughters that all your faiths may be supporting powers in your time of watching, and in what lies beyond.

“I am sending you a little book, my last publication (‘The Eternal Son of God and the Human Sonship’). If you are not in the mind for reading it just now, never mind. If there is anything in it worth your attention—and your friendship will confer an interest far beyond the real worth of the book—it will keep until you are ready for it ; but I like to keep you aware of what one is doing, whom you knew and trusted, and admitted to your home life, when he was a very unformed lad. . . .”

“22nd March, 1904.

“Dr. Davidson’s book arrived, and I have already read a few chapters of it, much to my gratification. I can understand now the extraordinary influence he exercised for so many years on his own students, and his pre-eminent place in recent Scottish Theology. He was a striking example of reverence, even caution, in temper, and fearlessness in investigation ; he almost seems occasionally to have suspected, without disapproval, that his students would go further than himself.

“I was interested in what you told me about Mr. Smellie. In 1852, when I was in Portpatrick, there was a Hugh Smellie, supervisor of excise then. His father was a U. P. minister in Stranraer ; I have wondered if this man belongs to that connection. Dr. Fairbairn told me he was a Reformed Presbyterian.

"I have been much interested in coming in contact with American Presbyterians of the smaller tribes. I met the son of a 'Reformed Presbyterian,' called also 'Cameronian and Covenanter.'

"I said to him, 'What are these names doing in America? The United States never signed the Covenant.'

"'No,' said he, 'but they stand for the moral personality of the nation.'

"I was much impressed by the mixture of dourness and stateliness in the attitude. And some neighbours of mine are American U. P.'s. What precisely their 'United' means I don't fully know; but an old minister of the church I have met would pass for a good U. P.

"It becomes more and more touching to me to notice the nobility of differences in church parties. There is something very noble in tenacity of conscience even in small matters; something also very attractive in largeness and catholicity. If it were only possible for a man to be both Churchman and Dissenter at once! And the 'new man,' the 'colossal man,' as Dr. Temple called him in *Essays and Reviews*, is that—'that He might make in Himself of two one new man.' He is more than our peace; He is our reconciler, and makes of our diversity a bigger, wiser manhood than the wisest and best individual among us has ever dreamed of."

CHAPTER XX

LATER YEARS

*“Grow old along with me,
The best is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made.”*

BROWNING.

IN 1891 the Bowdon church, recognising the increasing claims of public work on Dr. Mackennal's time and strength, decided to give him an assistant, and for fourteen years with four successive colleagues Dr. Mackennal worked in happy co-operation. All the arrangements connected with each successive settlement were entered into by Dr. Mackennal with delicate consideration and careful provision both for his assistant and the church; the exact tenure of office whether “pastor's assistant,” or “assistant pastor,” or “assistant and probable successor,” was carefully specified, and the degree of the church's action in the matter made clear. The first holder of this office was the Rev. J. Kirk Maconachie who came from the Western College, and with whom Dr. Mackennal established cordial relations which were not broken when he left Bowdon to become successor to Dr. Finlayson, of Rusholme. Mr. Maconachie writes that in working with and under Dr. Mackennal he found him in every respect “large, tolerant, generous, helpful, more ready to advise than to direct, desiring that one should do one's work in one's own way, the most loyal friend in the church, and the best hearer in the congregation.” When he entered on a sole pastorate some one wrote

congratulating him on “escaping from a somewhat masterful tutelage.” “Never was congratulation more misplaced. Dr. Mackennal’s strength, wisdom, and clearness of conviction did give rise in some quarters to a notion that he liked to dominate, but I never expect to meet a strong personality more ready to concede, more gracious in giving way. More than most he could persevere and be patient for a distant end, but obstinacy, as every pettiness, was far from him. His strength was linked with tenderness, being rooted and grounded in love. This combination he would often speak of as an ideal of character, on one occasion, as I recollect, unconsciously describing himself. It was in a children’s sermon, such as he delighted to preach. Speaking of the Apostle John, he pointed out that the artists always paint him ‘with a face like a girl.’ This was not his picture of the apostle of love, his was that of a great strong man, bearded, rugged, large-handed. Such he was himself, and his heart kept the warmer that it was not worn on his sleeve.”

In September, 1893, Mr. Maconachie was succeeded by the Rev. M. F. Peterson, M.A., a Scotsman from the extreme north, who, after a happy ministry, left to become minister of the Clarendon Park Church, Leicester, in April, 1895. He was followed by the Rev. J. Hutchinson, who in May, 1897, succeeded the present writer as minister of the St. Ives Free Church, Huntingdonshire. In 1897 the Rev. W. Moncrieff, M.A., of the Edinburgh Theological Hall, became pastor’s assistant, and later, by vote of the church, became assistant pastor. Mr. Moncrieff’s health was not good in Bowdon, and the necessity of caring for him brought out Dr. Mackennal’s extreme considerateness. His letters, both during Mr. Moncrieff’s assistant pastorate and after his removal to Bournemouth, have a thoughtful tenderness which is almost womanly.

Very characteristically, while arrangements for Mr. Moncrieff's settlement were in progress, Dr. Mackennal took the initiative in the proposal for the reduction of his own salary :—

“To Mr. Muir.

“21st July, 1897.

“At our deacons' meeting next Tuesday evening it is very likely that the question of the assistant pastorate will come up. At our last church meeting I said that an assistant pastor should be more liberally remunerated by the church than a pastor's assistant, a curate, has been. The demands upon him will be greater; he will be expected to contribute to our different objects; he will be one of the leaders of the church, and not a mere temporary dweller among us.

“I have written the treasurer of the church, to tell him that I am quite ready to have my own salary re-considered in the light of these new demands. But I cannot be content that you, who have been in the counsels of the deacons so long, and who have always had so generous a care for me personally, should only hear from him of what I have said. To you, too, as a warm, personal friend for so many years, I can speak of this matter as it affects me, my own comfort and my prospects.

“I came to Bowdon with all my family to educate, and necessarily our household expenditure was very large. The church enabled me to care for them and educate them liberally. That demand is now a very slightly pressing one; and it is only fair that the church, which helped me to sustain my household, should be relieved of any obligation which might perhaps be burdensome.

“It is difficult for me to enter into details in a letter; but as you will certainly be called on for advice in this matter, I want you to know that I am not only prepared for any reasonable proposals, I want, by taking the initiative on this question, to set you all at perfect liberty to discuss it.

“The deacons, as representing the church, have never driven a hard bargain with me; and I shall discuss a financial question affecting me, with a frank and loyal spirit like their own. . . .”

Dr. Mackennal's habits with regard to money—illustrated in this letter—were consistently unworldly in the nobler sense; he was not careless nor oblivious of its uses, but he gave freely, saved not at all, and habitually measured

the worth of men and things by standards remote from financial considerations.

One of the interests which filled a large part in the later years of Dr. Mackennal's life was Mansfield College. Although he was at the time of its establishment officially connected with Lancashire College, he had helped to advocate the foundation of Mansfield, and had been present at its opening. When Dr. Dale retired from the chairmanship of the council in 1891, Dr. Mackennal was asked to succeed him, and for some years he gave much time and thought to the affairs of the college. Letters written by the chairman of a college council to its Principal are not of a kind for publication ; they necessarily deal with personal questions, the weighing of relative claims, and the discussion of proposals or possibilities which in some cases never become actualities. But they show the qualities which made Mackennal an admirable friend and counsellor, a delicate consideration for the feelings of his colleagues, an anxious adjustment of all proper claims, and firm rejection of fictitious pretensions, the habit of looking more at remote rather than immediate results, of weighing relevant considerations with judicial care, and of sparing himself no pains if he might lighten the burden of his colleagues.

On two separate occasions he delivered courses of lectures in the college, and was frequently included in the list of special preachers. The first course of lectures dealt with "Ministerial Jurisprudence," discussing the relation of Nonconformist ministers to the law of the land ; and in 1893 he filled the post of resident lecturer on pastoral theology. The following letter written by an American minister who attended the lectures in 1893 describes the impression they made on him :—

"When Dr. Fairbairn and Mr. Rutherford were returning thanks to you, I was strongly moved to rise and add those of an

outsider and foreigner. Thinking it might be irregular, I restrained myself.

"In America we take the Congregational idea so much for granted, that I fear we are not loyal, and the denomination suffers from it. Indeed, I, for one example, came here quite dissatisfied with it, particularly with its executive weakness in the organisation of missionary effort, &c.

"I will not say you brought me back. After a week or two of dismayed gazing at the Established Church of England, and the unchurched people of England, I had already come back; but your lectures were, as I wrote our New Haven Dr. Fisher to-day, a revelation to me of the richness and grandeur and triumph (in prophecy) of our principle. They gave me a positive belief in our order as still needing assertion.

"Scarcely less interesting, though painful, was your masterly exposition of our danger of intellectual aristocracy. So many testimonies to its correctness came to me. I had felt and said in London that our New England churches were treading the same path that the reigning church here has trod—that of class interest and loss of power; but I had not got hold of the philosophical history of it. You gave it, and I saw this one source of trouble causing our churches to take the side of aristocratic government in the beginning of the century (with the Federalist party), and to fall with their downfall; causing us to avoid humanitarian effort to such an extent that the Unitarian secession was strengthened largely; causing us to hold aloof in the early anti-slavery days, and at all times adopting an intellectual preaching and worship which has been our glory, and is now, in our more mixed population, our weakness. We need not less intellectual preaching, but variously adapted services."

The resolution passed by the council of Mansfield College when it was deprived of Dr. Mackennal's services has a descriptive quality which gives it a value unlike the conventional eulogy of such resolutions:—

"The council of Mansfield College desires to put on record its sense of the eminent services rendered by the late Alexander Mackennal, Doctor of Divinity, to all the Free Churches of England, but especially to those of the Congregational Order, and to this college and through it to the Christian ministry in all the churches.

"It desires also to express its profound regret at the loss his death has inflicted on our religious institutions in general, and Mansfield

College in particular. He took a leading part in its foundation, and has been its chairman since the retirement of Dr. Dale in 1891. He was at once a scholar and a divine, suave yet firm, gracious in spirit and speech, kind yet courageous, thoughtful and courteous as a chairman, considerate to candidates, affectionate to students, the devoted friend alike of the tutors and the members of the council and the board. He would have adorned the headship of any institution; for he was wise and statesmanlike in counsel, upright in conduct, clear-sighted in policy, reserved and restrained in temper, conciliatory in word, and in deed fearless, honest and honourable. Details never wearied him nor the labour needed for their mastery.

"We desire to express our gratitude to God for the gift of so good and so wise a man as our late chairman, and we instruct the secretary to inscribe this resolution in the minutes, and the Principal to forward the same to his family."

The following letter from Dr. Fairbairn adds a personal touch to this testimony:—

"SIR,—Kindly allow me to supplement, on two points, the few words spoken at the funeral service of Dr. Mackennal. That occasion was so solemn and so intimate that any reference to what might be considered external concerns was instinctively felt to be out of place. But I feel deeply that since we laid R. W. Dale to rest our Churches have experienced no such loss as they have now to mourn. Dr. Mackennal was a sagacious counsellor, a willing servant of all who had need of him, a man of extraordinary gifts who was ready to give up his all for the good of our churches and the causes they stood for. It has been my privilege to know three or four men of whom this could be said, and of them all we may say that their moral integrity and wisdom surpassed their intellectual genius and weight. Macfadyen, Hannay, Dale and Mackennal stand out as men of varying degrees of intellectual eminence, who yet all agreed in their common consecration to our evangelical faith, and their readiness to suffer and to labour on behalf of our churches. They belong to the very elect of our Christian religion, they were men whose services death came to reveal by showing us what we had lost. And in these respects no one of the four excelled our lately-lost friend. He served his church as only a man who believed in its high destiny could. His religion was simple but not bald; he disliked pretence in all its forms, ecclesiastical or civil, but he was too convinced a man to do other than respect conviction wherever it was to be found. It mattered not to him whether a cause was popular or

unpopular, he only enquired, does it love truth, stand for freedom, and promote religion, and if he found it did it commanded his love and loyal service. His mind was stored with reminiscences of all the great movements of the last half century, and of the men who had led and embodied them. He understood as few men did the inter-relations of civil and religious freedom, the way in which the churches could best serve the State and their need of independence, and the absence of all hope of reward if they were to render to the State the highest service possible to them. To hear him speak as to church rates, as to education, as to church and State, was to be instructed and illuminated by a master who had proved by experience the truth of what he said. He knew no fear, and he courted no favour; and he was trusted as a leader because he was so respected as a man.

"The other question was one I could not touch, because it involved so many and such intimate, both personal and official, relations. Dr. Mackennal was one of the three men to whom Mansfield College owed its being, its organisation, and its success. The other two were Dr. Dale and Mr. Albert Spicer. From the moment of Dale's retirement till his own death Mackennal was the chairman. He grudged neither time nor thought nor labour in its services. He travelled often and freely from Bowdon to Oxford or London in its interests. His courtesy, patience, and tact, though at times sorely taxed, never failed. All had the most ample confidence in his capacity, his judgment, his integrity. Whatever the question which emerged, whether connected with the constitution under which the college was to be worked, or with an appointment to the staff, or the examination or reception of candidates, it received from him a consideration and treatment which commanded universal respect. And his interest in the college, so far from lagging, increased with the years. Towards the end he had planned in order to its fuller efficiency more frequent meetings of the board and the council, and more immediate oversight of its work. He was one of the most open-minded of men, and one, too, of the most generous. So far as my knowledge extends, every man who met him had his idea of Christian chivalry, courtesy, manhood, and discretion raised and enhanced. Of all the institutions he served so willingly none will miss him more than Mansfield College. He believed in its ideals, and he laboured to make its practice more worthy of the ideal he thought so needful to the ministry and the churches. We had grown to trust him—to lean upon him; and we mourn him to-day as a fallen leader—a strong tower into which the church ran in times of danger and felt safe. Of all the causes poorer because of Mackennal's death, none will be more impoverished than

our college, for to it he gave the wisdom of his maturer years, the riches of his large experience, and the strength of his unconquerable faith.

“I am,
“Yours, &c.,
“A. M. FAIRBAIRN.”

For many years Dr. Mackennal’s home was a singularly happy one. Mrs. Mackennal had devoted herself to her children, and her devotion was repaid as they grew into a happy family circle with home as their chief centre of attachment. The two elder boys were educated at the Leys School, Cambridge, and the youngest at Rugby. Harry, the eldest son, shared his father’s interest in science, and after he had left the Leys elected to become a doctor. He was never strong, and his father watched his whole educational career, both at school and at Owens College, Manchester, with anxious care, knowing that any overstrain in work might have serious results. In 1897, when Harry had completed his long medical course and received his first appointment at Ancoats Hospital, and when the call for special care and watchfulness seemed almost at an end, a sudden illness shattered his delicate frame, and Dr. Mackennal was abruptly called to stand by the deathbed of his son. The blow fell unexpectedly; it was made heavier by circumstances which prevented the father from knowing of his son’s illness till he was almost beyond recovery. Harry’s recent engagement, the apparent fulfilment of many years of patient hope, and the subtle sympathy which existed between father and son, making Harry, in a special sense, the son of his father’s mind, added elements of tragedy to the overwhelming event. The blow went deep and aged Mackennal visibly in a few weeks. He never seemed an old man till after this loss; but from this time, although he rallied and refused to give way to the burden of grief

which he evidently carried, he walked "softlier and sadlier" all his days. His children recall that the day after Harry's death their father spent the day in the study writing. The letters written that day have come to me from many quarters. They are remarkable letters. The writer spares himself nothing, he goes over every detail of the brief illness, touches all the tender recollections of Harry's childhood and schooldays, and sees it all in the light of a love which he has no doubt has ordained the end as well as the beginning. It is as though the mind had wrestled with its sorrow, that the sorrow might not be allowed to stun the mind, but yield some treasure for the living.

"2nd July, 1897.

"... Harry received his appointment as junior house surgeon at Ancoats Hospital just a fortnight ago. On the following Monday he got up, but felt ill and went back to bed. On Wednesday he was better and got up, but he didn't stay up long. On Friday he wrote B—— M——, and said he had been ill, but was better now. But he said his right arm felt as if it had been mangled. All this time he told us nothing. The matron wondered that none of us were coming up to see him; he told her that I was in London, and he wouldn't write his mother for fear of alarming her; he also said his brother might come in any afternoon.

"It was not until Saturday evening that any of the hospital people thought seriously of the case. Then Dr. Ledward wrote me a second letter, a few hours after his first; but I was in Gainsborough, and the letters remained unopened until I came back on Monday. Then Effie went up. On Tuesday morning I got a letter from the matron begging me to come up that day. I went at once and spent a little time with him. He was quite himself, but weary; he said he was very tired, and after I had been with him about twenty minutes, he asked me to go. He told me in answer to my question that he was worse than in his attack of two years ago. Indeed, from the first, he seemed more impressed than those about him with the gravity of the case. On Friday night, Dr. Scott begged him to get back to bed, and not go out into the wards. He said, 'Shall I ever get up again?' Dr. Scott thought he was nervous, and rallied him, quite unsuspecting of mischief.



Photo by

MRS. MACKENNAL.

F. M. Sutcliffe.

"To come back to our visits. On Wednesday morning I went up again, and found him delirious, but not wholly so. He had been delirious even so early as Sunday, but at rare intervals. He would only let me stay half an hour. When I was bidding the matron good-bye she expressed a wish that his mother should come up in the afternoon and not on Thursday.

"Fanny went up at once and stayed five hours, returning about seven. Effie saw him that day, and Margaret and Harold, and Alex. Alex. was much pained with the wild eye, and I saw him much worse on Wednesday than on Tuesday. His mother's visit was the most beautiful thing in the whole course of the week. He was so happy to have her there that he thought—apparently—he was at home, and said, 'This is much nicer than Ancoats.'

"That night he became unconscious and he never recovered consciousness. When I went up with Alex. at ten on Thursday the matron wished me not to go away, and I stayed until the end. He was in a burning fever, breathing rapidly, pulse sometimes 180—his normal pulse was 65. His temperature varied from 104 to 106, and was only kept down to that by continual applications of iced water fomentations. Dr. Reynolds, who was attending him, did not think it was typhoid; he rather thought it was thickening of the colon, with congestion, due to influenza. Dr. Leech, the first physician in Manchester, came in to see him, and agreed with Dr. Reynolds. That it was not typhoid was proved by a new blood test, applied by Dr. Delepine, at Owens College. The unconsciousness was partly due to opium, given to allay the diarrhoea; but it was mainly owing to the poison in the blood. At a quarter past ten at night I went to bed, and at half past eleven I was called down again. They were then giving him nothing; his breathing was very rapid and the burning continued. There was a rattle in the chest and throat, which about a quarter to one became very loud, and the end was rapidly coming on. Sometimes you could not feel the pulse, and then again it was rapidly going. About one the rattle quieted, then the breathing ceased, then there was one last expiring effort of the lungs, and all was over.

"There is to be a post-mortem, which may perhaps reveal what none of the doctors have suspected. Miss Chambers, the matron, suspected tubercle, like Clement.

"His last three months have been very happy. Graduating, and with congratulations from his examiners, getting more offers of *locum* work than he could accept, having high testimonials from his teachers when he applied for the Ancoats work, and then being unanimously and at once appointed, he seemed to be beginning a promising

career. His engagement, too, made him happy. He has greatly matured during the last two years ; but for these three months his old, frank, happy temperament returned. As he was to go, he could not have left us with a more happy and a more tender memory. . . .

“ The nurses and doctors waited on him as if he had been a dear brother ; and even the secretary and members of the Board are touched. It’s not only his amiability, they had noticed his enthusiasm for his work, and were cherishing high hopes. All sorts of people in Bowdon and Altrincham seem touched with deep regret.

“ The funeral will be on Monday, 12.30, in the Bowdon Downs church, 2 at the Manchester Crematorium. . . .

“ I cannot tell you how I feel. Through all the time of disappointment, we have never varied in our confidence in each other ; and in his success, he opened out to me in a delight of frankness. That has come which I have been expecting for years ; and now it has come, I cannot wish it otherwise. But the days go wearily. I used to sit up and wait for him when he was out at night ; and when he came in everything was right. And then, I cannot but feel deeply for those who had not my preparation ; especially for poor B —. Their love for each other was a quite unexpected source of education for both.

“ As time goes on, his memory will gather round it a beautiful softness and tenderness, but he himself will be wanting. I can only believe that the end of his earthly discipline was to add the element of strenuousness to his singularly open, sweet nature ; and that being developed, it was better for him to go elsewhere.”

“ My dear FAIRBAIRN,

“ 12th July, 1897.

“ You will not wonder that I have not written you sooner. Your letter brought me the first real comfort I got from any man ; but if I had answered it at once, I should have poured out an incoherence of love and sorrow which I am sure you would have tolerated, but which would not have been wholesome for me. You knew Harry slightly ; but you can hardly have felt the charm which those who knew him better felt. Mr. Hall, one of his first teachers, speaks of it as ‘ the spell ’ of his character which he too came under.

“ His was one of the sweetest natures I have ever known. There was a Hellenic frankness of enjoyment and catholicity in judgment about him, which I always used to wonder at. For a man like me, a dour Saxon tempered with the variable heats of the Celt, to have such a son seemed incomprehensible, until I reflected that every one

has two parents, and I recognised that I was loving his mother again in him.

“ You know he often failed in his University examinations, but he bore his disappointments so graciously, never undervaluing the successes he failed to win, nor saying a disparaging word of those who passed him, that I used to be more thankful for the revelations of character that came out thus than I should have been for conspicuous achievements. More than once he failed, evidently by his own fault, but he would take my remonstrances so beautifully, and part from me with such a child-like sweetness of spirit, that I could thank God for such a son.

“ For the last two years I have had nothing to complain of in him. He had become engaged, and although I was annoyed that he should be courting when his work claimed his attention, I see now that this helped to make him a grave, resolved man. I am more glad than I can say that he graduated honourably, and took such certificates from the teachers who knew of his many failures, that I can hold up my head, and speak of him as full of promise of professional distinction.

“ Two things his fellow-students and those who knew him in intimate intercourse and in the athletic field, speak of. They say they never heard an unkind word fall from his lips, and they were struck with his great purity of thought and feeling. And he was spirited too ; the mark of Christ was upon him.

“ He had too a strain of the heroic in him. He could have led, or followed, a forlorn hope ; or have sucked poison from a wound, altho' he had known he was imperilling his life. He was no admirer of Browning, and used to make fun of me because I was. A poor little kitten came to us once, a very ill-bred creature, and partly because it was brown, and also because of its quaint incomprehensibility, he called that kitten Robert Browning. And yet there is nothing which has seemed to me more appropriate to him than the epilogue to *Asolando*.

“ Add to the words on the memorial card I send you these words from Longfellow :—

‘ Bear a lily in thy hand ;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand,’

and you have Harry as he appeared to me.

“ He died because his bodily frame was more sensitive than strong. I wanted him to take a long holiday after his graduation ; but he was eager to begin work. Appointments as *locum tenens*

pressed in upon him ; and he had set his heart on the post in Ancoats Hospital which was unanimously and heartily given him. He had applied a fortnight before he was appointed ; two days after he sickened—probably influenza*—he had a week of low fever, then five days of high fever, and so he burnt away. It is a mingled comfort and sorrow to me that I have for some years anticipated an early end to his life. But I do not repent that I chose for him, and he chose for himself, the medical course, with all its hardness. Nothing could so have trained him ; it was needful that he should learn the severity of the divine order, and the painful side of human life ; and I know no way in which he could have learnt the lesson so effectively as to have sent him to study all the branches of medicine. He had a happy life too ; he was almost always sunny ; and for the last three months of his life, there was, together with a pitiable slightness of figure, a spring in his gait and a brightness in his face which it is a joy to remember. We are all profoundly sorrowful for the girl he loved and who loved him ; sad too that he is to be here no more ; but I am sure that all is well.

“One thing touched me very much, and you will understand its significance. His hand was naturally the poorest and feeblest part of his body ; he developed it by athletics, and cared for it, knowing how needful a good hand was to a doctor. And when he died it was the firmest, strongest and least wasted part of the frame.

“Now you know something of what I have lost, and something too of what I have gained, in this dear son.

“With love to you all, and knowing that I have not written a word more than your affection will gladly read,

“I am,

“Yours in gratitude,

“ALEX. MACKENNAL.”

* The disease is now believed to have been appendicitis.

CHAPTER XXI

CANADIAN AND AMERICAN LETTERS

The great affair is to move; to feel the needs and hitches of our life more nearly; to come down off this feather-bed of civilisation, and find the globe granite under foot and strewn with cutting flints. Alas, as we get up in life and are more pre-occupied with our affairs, even a holiday is a thing that must be worked for.—R. L. S.

BETWEEN 1898 and 1901 Dr. Mackennal was in America three times, once for a long journey across the Western Continent on a mission described in the following letters; again for the International Council in Boston in 1899; and a third time for the delivery of the Carew Lecture in Hartford Theological Seminary, Connecticut, in 1900. The following letters, which are typical of many others, refer to the first of these occasions only.

“. . . I had a nice time of rest in Montreal. In the afternoon, Arnold Sugden—Dr. Sugden as he is called in Montreal—took me a drive in his buggy. We went up the mountain; it was very delightful, not at all too hot. . . .

“I left yesterday afternoon for a five days' journey by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and have spent my first night aboard. The night travelling is delicious, a fine broad bed, strictly clean sheets and soft mattresses. The day part is a little crowded. But it is not hot. The scenery up till now is interesting, sometimes striking. One thing has impressed me very much. Coming up the St. Lawrence, and all along to where we now are, approaching Lake Superior, there are the continuous marks of ice action. I suppose it will be so right up to the Rockies.

“It will be a week more before I shall get letters from home. I have no doubt before that time comes I shall be anxious for news. On board ship it does not matter so much, you don't expect it, but here one looks for letters. It seems strange too, to reflect that I

have been running away from letters ; so that I could not have had, under any circumstances, later news than those of two days after my departure. . . . ”

“ GLACIER HOUSE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2nd July, 1898.

“ . . . This has been a wonderful day. From the close of an early breakfast in Calgary up to eight o’clock this evening, we have been passing through scenery of a most impressive character. Calgary you may remember as Arnold Sugden’s market town, about thirty miles to the north of his ranch. It is a pretty little town, quite new, with several fine stone buildings in it ; the town looks as if a good deal of business might be done in it. At Calgary we caught sight of the snow peaks of the Rockies, eighty or ninety miles away, gleaming through the sunshine. We travelled along that distance through a country which reminded me a little of Dumfriesshire ; a pastoral country with low grassy hills, and a broad river of glacial water with charming little wooded islands in it. Then we began to ascend between much higher mountains. They are, I think, of limestone ; and much worn into cavities. The peaks on the southern summits look like German castles, with long Gothic windows and buttressed fronts. There was one strikingly like Heidelberg castle, but very much higher than any German castle I know in its site. These continued until we neared Banff, which is on a high bit of comparatively level land, charmingly wooded. Here Dr. King left us. He will probably be at Banff for three weeks, and as I hope to ‘stop over,’ as they call it, at Banff for twenty-four hours, I am expecting to see him again. He is a delightful old man, brought up among the United Presbyterians, and knowing several of my old friends. Mr. Aiking remained, and came on with me to Glacier House. I have had my usual good fortune in travel in meeting him. He is solicitor to the Canadian Pacific Railway, and all the servants on board the train were prompt in serving him ; and, as he charged himself with looking after me, I have been well attended to. In this house there are not very many single bedrooms, but the lady who manages the hotel gave us two of the best rooms in the house.

From Banff we ascended the Rockies, passing through a beautiful valley with more of these Gothic-like cliffs. One called the Cathedral mountain, had spires and roofs and windows ; and another called St. Stephen looked not unlike Milan Cathedral perched seven or eight thousand feet above us. Then we turned round and came into the Wapta Cañon—or as they call it by an English name—the Kicking Horse Cañon. It is a wild gorge ; with a brawling river—

the Kicking Horse ; the whole of that cañon reminded me a little of the Simplon on the Italian side. It is not only the forms of the mountains which are impressive. The rocks have fine colours, various shades of yellow brown ; and the green of the grass, where the snow slides down, is soft and lovely. We ran down the Western side of the Rockies, went along the valley of the Columbia River for several miles and then began to ascend the Selkirks. Here we came into the region of the glaciers. We came up to the summit, with constant lateral views of snow mountains, like one or two of the side valleys of the St. Gothard. Glacier House is a couple of miles below the summit. A magnificent glacier is within half an hour's walk of the house.

"I am to be called for my bath at seven to-morrow, and hope at 8.30 to start for a walk up to the foot of the glacier, and to be back in time for service, which one Canon Beaumont is to conduct. I am obliged to travel to-morrow, although it is Sunday. I must leave at three in the afternoon, and hope to be in Vancouver in about twenty-four hours. I shall spend all Tuesday in Vancouver, and leave for Portland on Wednesday morning.

"I have found both the prairie day and this mountain day very invigorating. I am tired, but not exhausted. The freshness of the air, and the complete rest to the mind, have done me a lot of good. . . ."

To Mrs. Mackennal.

"VANCOUVER HOUSE, VANCOUVER, 5th July, 1898.

"Yesterday, at one o'clock, I got your letter. It was brought me by J——, who, with her husband, was at the station to meet me. I had luncheon with them, and in the afternoon went for a walk into what is here called Stanley Park, a fine bit of the original forest, which the Government of the Dominion has set apart for public purposes. I then came back to my hotel, and after dinner, and a visit from the minister, Mr. Bainton, went to bed at half-past nine. I was in need of bed, for I had not slept well the night before, and we were up to breakfast before seven. Last night I slept on—a deep, full sleep, until a quarter to seven this morning—about nine hours unbroken sleep. I have been all round the city since, and am going to have afternoon tea and an evening walk with J—— and her husband.

"To-morrow morning at nine, I leave for Tacoma, which I shall reach about eight in the evening. At six next morning I shall leave for Portland, arriving at 11.30. Then my journeying will be at an end for four days. I set out eastward next Monday for Winnipeg, which

I hope to reach on Saturday, the 16th. I am to be in Montreal for Sunday, the 24th. I have promised to preach at Winnipeg and at Montreal. I expect I shall leave Winnipeg not later than Tuesday, July 19th. You will not get this before the 15th, too late to write me there.

“This is a very charming city. It is not large; it has a population about equal to Altringham and the townships. The middle of the town has a thriving business look. The harbour is magnificent. Imagine Falmouth Harbour with a much greater length, and the view opposite bounded by forest-land and snow mountains. The residential part of the city stretches all round, on heights from which beautiful views of mountains and harbour are everywhere to be had. These suburbs are not so well finished as Englewood, nor are there so many large houses, but that is their style. The gardens, however, and the flowers in front of the house are more charming than those of Englewood. Roses, in great masses of flower, run up to the first floor windows. J—— has a wild cucumber on her house, some have wistaria; and the flower beds are gay with petunias and carnations and other flowers of home, with fine evergreen shrubs between. The people are thriving, there are no poor, and no wealthy, unemployed class. There is sure to be a very fine and prosperous city here in another century.

“J—— is looking very well, and seems very happy. She has a small house, drawing-room in front, opening with a curtain to a smaller dining-room behind. There is a large kitchen with a scullery, and a neat little hall—that is all the ground floor. Above are three or four bedrooms. She keeps no servant, but life is very much simplified here for young people. Her husband keeps her supplied with cut wood for the stove, and he does the rough cleaning of the stoves. He also lays the fire, and is down in the morning first, seeing to the hot water. She attends to the keeping the house in order, does her own washing up, but I don’t think she does the scrubbing. She has two devoted Chinamen—one who attends to the washing, the other brings her vegetables and fruit, as well as poultry and eggs. Most of the catering is done either this way or by telephone, so that she really has not much more work than most English women, and much less bother. All the ladies here live very much in the same way. There is no society like that of the Allans and the Griffiths, nor like that of the Mackinnons and the Haigs in Montreal.

“The place is wonderfully prolific. We had a currant tart yesterday with luncheon, and I could hardly believe that J—— had gathered all the currants from one bush in her own garden. She

has also one raspberry bush which gives her fruit in proportion, and when she wants blackberries, she goes on to the next lot—that is the empty building site next her own—and gathers them.

“I am sure you will be interested in hearing all about her and her way of living. . . .”

“PORTLAND HOUSE, PORTLAND, OREGON,

“7th July, 1898.

“At last you are getting a letter dated Portland. It is just three weeks since I left home, and only about three hours ago I reached my destination. The first thing I did was to go to the Post Office. Your letter of June 22nd only reached Portland yesterday, so I suppose it will be thirteen days before you get this.

“I left Vancouver yesterday morning, having spent the previous afternoon and evening with J—— and her husband. Dr. Pearson took me for a long walk into and around Stanley Park. From one point we looked westward and saw Vancouver’s Island. I say I have not seen the Pacific, but J—— says I have as much seen the Pacific as people in Blackpool see the Atlantic, as Vancouver’s Island is even further from Victoria than Ireland from England. It was an exquisitely beautiful view, like what I have figured to myself of the south seas—soft waters between wooded headlands opening out to the sea.

“I found to my satisfaction that although the time table says leave Vancouver 9 a.m. and arrive at Portland next day at 11.50 a.m., I had not to be travelling all the time.

“At Seattle there was a break of two hours, and I slept at Tacoma. The day was lovely, and all the afternoon and evening we were circling one snow mountain, called at Seattle Mount Rinier, but elsewhere Mount Tacoma. It seems a peculiarity of the snow mountains here that they stand alone, and the result is they are the more impressive. You see the snow all the way down. There are four such mountains visible from Portland.

“Seattle has a beautiful situation, on an inlet from Puget Sound. It stands high and looks well from a distance, but when you get out of the railway station you have a dreadful disappointment. It is the centre of the mining industries near Mount Baker, and a good starting point for Klondike. The town has thus not only grown rapidly, but it has grown in a cheap, shoddy fashion, which is very objectionable. The streets are dreadful, even for this side the Atlantic, and the shops are full of showy goods, and showy, flashy people to set them off.

“I reached Tacoma about nine, and getting into a hackney cab,

I fell into conversation with a young man, who told me he had been to see his father in England. 'What part?' I asked. 'Cheshire.' I asked a little more eagerly, 'What part of Cheshire?' 'Bowdon,' said he. 'Indeed,' I said, 'What is your father's name?' adding that I was from Bowdon. 'Waterhouse' was his reply, and then he asked who I was. When I told him he uttered an ejaculation. Not only did he at once know me, but J—— had told him two or three days before that I was to be in Vancouver, but that we should meet in a hackney cab in his own city was quite unexpected.

"As the train was to leave Tacoma for Portland at 6.30 a.m., I went to bed early. I did not remember not to stir until I was called, as the train is sometimes late, so I came down before six. I found that there had been a detention of two hours and a-half. I breakfasted at a quarter before seven, and then went for a walk. Tacoma is beautiful, in situation somewhat like Seattle, but a home of refined houses and beautiful gardens. You climb steep streets, and branching off on the levels right and left as you ascend are the residences of the people, a series of terraces looking over a wide expanse of sea water with wooded islands, and wooded mainland.

"We had a hot and dusty ride to Portland; and the first thing I did on my arrival was to take a bath. I had two pleasant travelling companions, professors in Hartford Seminary, on their way to the Council. They have probably gone to the Council this afternoon. I shall not go until after dinner; I should not turn up until tomorrow, but that the 'Memorial Church at Gainsborough' is to be reported on.

"On Monday I shall begin my journey back. I don't think I shall get letters after Monday until I reach Montreal. . . . Next letter I write I shall have to tell you of the Council, and what friends I have seen."

To Mrs. Harold Massey (née Margaret Mackennal).

"PORTLAND HOUSE, PORTLAND, OREGON, 9th July, 1898.

"Probably you have been kept informed of my proceedings by the letters I have written to the others. Harold will be glad he did not come with me when he knows that they have had very hot weather in the United States. The Boston party to Portland, who went by the Omaha Exhibition, Colorado, Denver, Salt Lake City and the Alkaline Desert, must have had a trying journey; the thermometer was 98° and their cars were very full. I came along under English skies, for two days we scarcely saw the sun; the only hot and dusty day I had was that on which I came from Tacoma here.

"This western side of the Rocky Mountains is an English Paradise ; and Portland is a kind of capital city of the Paradise. We have a beautiful sky, warm days, cool nights, charming houses of wood, and lovely gardens. Everywhere there are trees, green grass, splendid roses, and an abundance of subtropical plants. I am living at an hotel. A lady was kind enough to prepare to entertain me, but somehow I missed her invitation, and knew nothing of her kindness until this morning. As I leave on Monday I don't think of making any change.

"I have come here at a very interesting time. July 4th is the day on which, all through America, there is celebration of the Act of Independence. And on July 4th came the news of the destruction of the Spanish Fleet. The people are in a state, rather of sensitiveness than of excitability ; they are feeling great gladness for the victory and the promise of peace, but a sense of their responsibility for the future of Cuba is beginning to press on them. 'Those Cubans are a bad lot,' said a president of a college to me at breakfast this morning, 'and we shall have our work to train them for liberty.' Friendship with England is the watchword everywhere ; and it is not simply that they are grateful that we have kept the hands of Europe off them, but that the thought of their having entanglements of foreign policy is giving them some sort of sense of the difficult task England has had in her foreign policy for two hundred years.

"I had a great reception at the Council, indeed, two receptions. The vice-moderator of the Council is staying at this hotel—he is an ex-governor of Connecticut. He asked me to walk down with him the first evening, and on the way he said, 'The Council will know you are come, and will be anxious to see you.' And so, although my reception was to take place next morning, he invited me to the platform with him, where he was presiding officer. Then, when he introduced me, the whole Council rose, the organ struck up 'God save the Queen,' and the Union Jack was spread out behind me. I am not used to be the centre of such stately proceedings, and was a little taken aback. I thanked them heartily, made a reference to the Queen, as a person who had secured a wider and deeper affection and reverence than any one who had been known to history. This was enthusiastically responded to. Then I told a little story, and sat down. My little story was this : At Winnipeg station the newspaper boy, when I wanted to buy an evening paper, offered me two papers for five cents. I said, 'I don't want to buy two evening papers.' He replied, respectfully enough, 'I think you'd better take the two, sir, you won't find the same news in them.'

As I was asked to represent the Canadian churches, and an American minister had been previously asked to do the same thing, the application was at once caught, especially when I added that I was the two cent. man, and my brother, who was to follow, the three cent. man. Next morning I made a much longer and graver speech ; and the reception was equally cordial.

“ You should see the fruit here. There was a specimen of Oregon cherries on the hotel counter—such fine fruit I have never seen, and it is good as well as good-looking. We have raspberries every morning with breakfast. Yesterday I lunched entirely on fruit : a peach, cherries, and a Californian orange. It was very good, but I don’t intend to repeat the experiment. I am living practically on two meals a day, and I am having to limit even these.”

To Mrs. Mackennal.

“ BANFF SPRINGS HOTEL, BANFF, ALBERTA,

“ 14th July, 1898.

“ Your last letter was the one you wrote on June 29th, nor have I had a later letter from any one. I mention this, so that if you have written to Portland since, you may understand that it will not reach me for a day or two yet, perhaps not until I get to Montreal. This explanation may save you some wonder if I should not be replying to anything you have said.

“ I am now fairly on my return, 1,000 miles nearer home than I was when I last wrote. At a pretty little town called Donald, between the Selkirk Mountains and the Rocky Mountains, the time suddenly went forward an hour. We are now only seven hours behind you instead of eight.

“ I have been very fortunate in my travel. Out of six nights spent on board the railway cars, only one was disturbed. Then I had an upper berth, and it was hot, and I did not get five hours’ good sleep. But every other night I have slept well. At Tacoma and at Seattle and the last night at Portland, I had disturbed nights ; but these are actually the only poor nights I have had.

“ I am enjoying my return journey even more than the outward one. My work is done, and there has been no hitch, and I have learnt that travel is as safe and easy here as in England, and all that tends to composure. I have had beautiful weather, too, for these wonderful canyons. I am not seeing exactly the same things. Going, for instance, I slept by the Thompson Canyon and saw the Shawsup Lake. Returning, it was reversed. These canyons or cañons, as they should be spelt, are deep rocky gorges, with a turbulent stream at the bottom of each. Two or three times we

went along bits of road, which even my experience up Monte Generoso had not quite prepared me for.

"I got into Banff last night, and am spending twenty-four hours here. The quiet, and the absence of hurry, and the stability of the floor would be agreeable, even if the scenery were ordinary; but this is a beautiful Alpine spot. There is one point of contrast between these hills and the Alps; the pass is greener and the vegetation more abundant here, but there is not a head of cattle to be seen, nor a salad garden, nor a hen. The railway, which has made the land, brings the provisions. By-and-bye, two centuries hence, much of this country will have hotels and villas and cottages, and the feeling of desolation will be gone. Everywhere now, there are the dead pines which speak of forest fires; magnificent sweeps of forest, with hardly a living tree in them. The trees themselves grow much larger than in the Alps or the Black Forest, but the effect of all this death is often depressing.

"I found here my friend Dr. King; and I made two new friends, a doctor in Glasgow, who knows the Maclehoses,—indeed, he is Mr. Maclehone's doctor,—and his wife; and we are all going for a drive this afternoon. This morning, at eleven, Dr. King is to take me for a walk. At 8.20 I resume my journey, and expect to be at Winnipeg in thirty-four hours, that is, on Saturday morning. I shall stay at Winnipeg, probably until Tuesday morning, and then return to Montreal. At Winnipeg, I am not likely to want for friends.

"At Portland it was getting to be hot; and Monday was warm. Tuesday afternoon was hot, and the railway car was exposed to the sun. The bed-maker left one of the windows of my berth down, and so the heat, though decided, was quite endurable. As we drew near to the Rockies, I saw that we were running into a storm; and soon we had rain and lightning and thunder. Last night it was pleasantly cool. I have been so fortunate thus far that I am hoping to return without any baking. The Boston party, who had kindly asked me to join them, must have had some frightful times."

"WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, 18th July, 1898.

"The hot weather has come at last, and so have the mosquitoes. We had it cool and pleasant up to Banff; where Dr. King received me, and took me for a pleasant drive on Thursday afternoon to a lake, called in the Indian tongue Minni Wanka, and in the baser English, Devil's Lake. It is a very lonely lake, full of fish, and surrounded with all sorts of Canadian flowers, which made me long for a Canadian botanical book and six weeks to use it in.

"On Friday, crossing the prairie, the heat began. Fortunately

the car was not very full, and we had only to keep perfectly still. I solaced myself with 'patience,' and a lady relieved my solitude by teaching me a new game called 'casino.' In the evening, when the sun went down, the heat abated; and I had a fairly cool night. The sunset was very beautiful. The foreground was the prairie with its still green but rapidly browning grass, and patches of grey sage-bush. The middle distance was that rich, deep indigo, which is characteristic of the prairie. This stretched for many miles like a blue ocean,—dark and placid. Behind it was a ruddy brown horizon, with the sun lighting up the evening sky.

"After a bath and breakfast, I rested for an hour and a half on Saturday morning, and then went to an agricultural show. In the afternoon came Mr. Pedley and Mr. Jacobs, both of whom I knew; and with them was a Mr. Jones, an English minister, travelling for health, for whom I preached at New Eltham, a few years ago, when I stayed with Mr. James Spicer. We went out by electric car to a beautiful park, by the Red River, but we were driven back by mosquitoes. Saturday night was hot; Sunday was very hot. I preached in the morning in Mr. Jacobs's church, in the evening in Mr. Pedley's, and as I warmed with my subject the mosquitoes beset me. I made each service about an hour and a few minutes long, for I was longing to get out of the hot church. The thermometer by the pulpit in the evening registered 90°. At night there came a thunder storm, which has left us to-day with a fresh breeze, a cooled ground, and a heat making rest very agreeable, but quite tolerable. . . .

"I am to have a reception in the church to-night at 8.30, and a talk on the federation of the churches. To-morrow morning I start for Ottawa, and on Friday hope to go down to Montreal, when I hope to find letters from home. I have enquired at the Post Office here for letters from Portland, but I have found none; so I am hoping you only wrote once to Portland—the letter whose receipt I have already acknowledged.

"I am in an English home here, the guest of a lady who used to live in Anerley. Her husband is in the service of the Hudson's Bay Co., he is in England just now. She is a very intelligent woman, trying to impress the graver type of English Congregationalism on the somewhat flightily church life of this place. It has been a great pleasure to me to have made her acquaintance. . . .

"I have had capital health all along. The hotel life is somewhat exciting, and it is difficult, with the profuse hotel table, to eat a little, and to find simple food. But I have done my best, and without starving myself I have avoided indigestion. I am looking

forward with pleasure to the Atlantic voyage, and to days of quiet when I can arrange all my very varied impressions. It has been a very instructive journey ; but life is a great whirl on this Western Continent. In a hundred years people will have learned to value quiet ; and then it will appear that there are many choice spots here. One of the marked features here is the superiority of the older to the younger type of Christian living. There is too much determination to have pleasure in church engagements, and altogether more excitement than repose in Christian life. . . .”

To Mr. Alec Mackennal.

“ RUSSELL HOUSE, OTTAWA, 21st July, 1898.

“ My railway travelling is about over, and I am very glad of it. With all the care taken to lighten the journey, the body gradually grows tired of the cramped position, and the constant jolts. And the stillness of a bed is very agreeable after the perpetual noise and movement of the railway mattresses. There is, moreover, something savouring of indelicacy in the toilet and sleeping arrangements ; and it is impossible to get a really good wash. A travelling bath-room would be a great luxury, and might pay.

“ I came in here to-day about 10 o’clock, and according to my custom at once had a bath. I thought of resting all day, but I have been about the city all the afternoon, and I have not had a better time since I left home than the last four hours. Although it is hot, there is a pleasant breeze ; the sky is perfectly clear, of a deep blue ; Ottawa stands on two rivers, the Ottawa and the Rideau, and the grass and trees are of a delicious green.

“ I put myself in the hands of an electric car conductor, and told him I wanted to see the city. He took me down Rideau Street and then away along the road where Sir Wilfrid Laurier and all the swells live. Then he told me to take a Rockcliffe car. Rockcliffe is a suburb, perhaps two miles out, and has a public park. For half-a-mile you go through forest ; and then come out on the top of a bluff overlooking the Ottawa ; the waters of which are indigo in colour. The view is very extensive—your mother will understand it if I compare it to the view from Richmond Hill. It is quite as extensive ; the distant hills are higher, wooded to the top ; and the intervening landscape is neither so highly cultivated, nor has it such fine trees. But it is quite as green. Indeed, the green of this place is surprising ; the weather has been very hot, and yet there is not a brown leaf nor blade of grass to be seen. Perhaps the falls of Chaudière account for it. Chaudière is at the other end of the city, and the end of the line of electric cars from Rockcliffe ;

and after I had rested my eyes at Rockcliffe, I went off to it. The Ottawa falls over a semi-circle of shady rock ledges, and the falls are beautiful. The water comes down blue, and the body of water behind the falls is blue, except under the sun, where it is silvery white. But just at the edge of the fall, where the water curls over, you see a band of rich amber brown—I suppose the river comes from peat—and the contrast and harmony of colour is very fine. This fall is made use of; there are two lumber mills and a paper mill; and a lady told me that you were allowed to see the saw mills. It is one of the most surprising and interesting sights I have ever seen. Huge logs of timber, tree trunks—come down the river and are caught and imprisoned in what they call here bones. The men and boys guide the logs to their fate in a gentle and seductive manner. They are led up to the lower end of what looks like a shoot. In the bottom of the shoot is an endless chain with great teeth of iron, which catch the logs and raise them to a higher level. At the sides of the shoot on this higher level are iron uprights which, at the turn of a crank, roll the logs over to another set of endless chains, working laterally. So are they guided to an iron table which works to and fro under a large saw, which reduces them to planks. Another saw table receives them from men's hands and cuts off the rounded edges. They are now squared, and the character of the timber appears. Some are planks and some are thick beams, but of good timber; these are laid on another table which has a circular saw, one at the right at the lower end of the table, which cuts off one irregular end. The table moves them on between a man on each side, who sets them for the circular saw at the upper end of the table which cuts off the left irregular end. The bad timber and the useless outsides are sent down a shoot, and the squared timbers of various lengths and thicknesses, are stacked. It is a wonderful scene of busy labour, power and precision; the horses are splendid creatures, well-groomed, and the men seem well fed. I would not have missed the sight on any account; it quite took away my weariness. Outside all are the beautiful falls, the spray from which keeps all cool.

"I leave to-morrow morning at 7.30 for a sail down the Ottawa, into the St. Lawrence, and shooting the La Chine rapids, into Montreal, which we shall reach at 7.30 in the evening. Then I shall be half-way home, and have nothing to do, except to preach once on Sunday, but wait for my boat on Thursday morning. If Montreal is very hot, and I find no friends there, I shall perhaps go down to Quebec and get the boat there. But I shall stay in Montreal if it is tolerable.

"The heat is considerable, but I have suffered no inconvenience ; and my mosquito bites are no longer irritating. . . ."

"MONTREAL, 24th July, 1898.

"This is a hot Sunday afternoon ; and I am sitting in a quiet room, darkened to keep out the sun. It is 5 o'clock, Montreal time, and already the fierceness of the sun's rays has abated ; to-night—like last night—we shall have it cool after midnight. I have been preaching in Emmanuel church this morning. I am not preaching to-night. It is holiday time, and two congregations united for this morning's service ; it was a well attended church, and I had an attentive body of hearers.

"I left Ottawa on Friday morning, and came down the Ottawa River. It is a little like the St. Lawrence, but more beautiful. After sailing from 7.30 to 1, we crossed a bit of land by rail, much as we did from Menaggio to Porlezza, and then got on to another steamer. After being in the West, the country looked very English ; the cultivation is so complete, there were park-like grounds here and there, and beautiful green fields, divided by hedges, and appearing between breaks in the woods.

"At Vaudreuil, where I joined the second steamer, Dr. George, of the Congregational college here, took possession of me. He told me that though I was to go to the Windsor, according to my intention, that night, the Emmanuel people were going to look after me ; and especially gave me an invitation from Mr. Learmont to stay with him. We sailed across a large piece of water, still the Ottawa, widened into a lake, and then by a lock we were let out into the St. Lawrence. This was at St. Annes. Do you remember the Canadian boat song ? 'We'll sing at St. Annes our evening hymn.' 'The rapids are near,'—these are not the rapids at La Chine, but the Ottawa rapids, and the lock is made to avoid them. We had a short run to La Chine, then down the rapids, and into Montreal. . . .

"I am glad to be so near home ; it seems very near. I have had a very good time. . . . I am standing the heat well. But the various excitements of the journey have been fatiguing, and I am longing to get out to the coolness and quiet of the Atlantic. After I have been at home two or three days, you will know how much of vigour I have recovered by this journey.

"I shall probably only write once more before I start. It is possible I may be at home on Saturday week—evening—but that is uncertain. I will telegraph if I have the opportunity from Moville, but that again I can't promise, for we may not go in there."

CHAPTER XXII

CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERESTS

“A look into that man’s mind was like a retrospect over the smiling champaign of his past life, and very different from the Sinai gorges up which one looks for a terrified moment into the dark souls of many good, many wise, and many prudent men.”—R. L. S.

IN May, 1898, Dr. Mackennal completed his fortieth year of ministerial service. There was a public celebration of the event and a foregathering of friends. Dr. Fairbairn, of Oxford, Dr. Corbett, of Glasgow, Mr. Carvell Williams, M.P., from London, and Dr. Maclarens, of Manchester, gave addresses. On the following morning Dr. Mackennal himself laid the foundation stone of a new church in Ashley Road, near Altrincham. The new place was built at a cost of £4,500, to meet the needs of Congregationalists migrating from Manchester to the Hale district. The cost was met by the parent church at the Downs, and a number of members were at once “dismissed” to form the nucleus of a new church; thus the new community soon became self-supporting.

On such occasions many true things are said about the public work of a public man, but much also is omitted which is of interest in forming an estimate of character and influence. A characteristic of which no public speech could give any idea was the interest and freshness of Dr. Mackennal’s mind in conversation. He had a retentive memory, an impressive manner, a mingling of dignified and colloquial diction, and he knew how to use conversational opportunities for giving expression to ideas which he had

seriously thought out. He was one of the few talkers about whom one felt that a Boswell would serve a useful purpose ; his best talk would have well repaid the labours of a Boswell if the congregation at Bowdon had supplied one, but no reports of conversations have been forthcoming except some notes by Mr. Moncrieff, Mr. Maconochie, and a few of my own, the latter belonging almost entirely to the last years of his life. They are given here almost exactly as they were taken down, and with only a general arrangement of subject-matter.

Talking of R. W. Dale's "Atonement," he mentioned that he had reviewed it in the *Nonconformist*.* He admitted and respected Dale's great expository powers, but dissented from many of his conclusions, as for instance, from his interpretation of the cry from the Cross, "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" He did not care much for the antithesis of subjective and objective : "What is subjective to the race may be objective to the individual." He thought also that Dale had ignored the truth of the solidarity of the race, without which no one could understand the moral theory of the Atonement. "I have been finding for forty years that God forgives sins through Christ's death, but cannot say I have a theory of the Atonement." The sum of all the varied results accomplished by the death of Christ on the heart and conscience of humanity may be conceived of as the reason of the Atonement. On this ground Christ might be preached as "the channel and the only channel of the divine mercy to men." The "ultimate result and the 'cause' are the same thing : result is objective, cause is subjective, yet we have not two things before us, but one thing under different aspects." He was very tolerant towards people with narrow views on the Atonement, and

* See p. 367.

mentioned that when he was on the hymnal committee he proposed the insertion of "Not all the blood of beasts, on Jewish altars slain," because otherwise the book would be impoverished to hundreds of those who must use it.

He frankly accepted a miraculous element in the gospels. "Why not say that creation was effected with a view to such action as we call the miraculous. A psychological explanation carries us a long way in some of the miracles. We know very little as to how personality acts on personality." He watched with close interest the developments of telepathy, and had a corner in his mind where he registered events which seemed to point to the thinning of the barrier which severs the spiritual and physical planes of life. He had a singular anecdote of a visit paid by Dr. Berry to a séance in London when the medium refused to act, on the ground that there was a much better medium present than herself; and this, though Dr. Berry's presence was purely accidental and his name unknown to the medium. The subject was one to which he gave intermittent attention for many years. Among his papers is a long manuscript account of the famous case of the Macdonalds of Port Glasgow, in which Thomas Erskine of Linlathen was specially interested. The letter contains a very critical analysis of the phenomena written by Mr. Arthur, Congregational minister in Helensburgh, to Dr. Russell, of Dundee, in 1830, and Mackennal appears to have secured it in 1878 at the cost of some pains. The following letter from Dr. Mackennal on the "Gift of Tongues" appeared in the *British Weekly* in February, 1889:

"SIR,—You have recently had two accounts of the 'tongues' in Irvingite assemblies. Perhaps your readers may be interested by an account of the same phenomenon as I observed it, about thirty-five years ago, in a Mormon meeting-room.

"The place was the parlour of a small house in Great Cambridge Street, Hackney Road, London. There was no 'dim religious light,'

the afternoon sun shining through a twelve-paned window only made more evident the common-place furniture of the chamber in which we were assembled. The congregation was a small one, perhaps under thirty; very humble people, artisans or small shopkeepers, the women being slightly, not markedly, in excess of the men. The presiding elder was also a plain man, not dressed in broadcloth; he was from a distance, but well known by the people, and much thought of by them. In the middle of the service—which was like a usual Nonconformist service, hymns, prayer, and sermon—there came suddenly into the room a woman with a print dress, spare in figure, with thin face, slightly flushed, and somewhat eager in expression.

“The service over, there was a time of testimony. Several persons rose and declared that ‘the gift of healing was in the church.’ There was a remarkable uniformity in the manner of the testimony, which was generally a story of cure personally experienced by the laying on of the hands of the Mormon elders. The woman to whom I have referred rose suddenly, and with deepened flush and brightening eye, spoke somewhat thus:—‘I testify that the gift of prophecy is in the church. I testify that the gift of healing is in the church. I was sitting in my own house to-day, not meaning to come to this meeting, when suddenly I saw the elder, who laid hands on me and recovered me, enter the room. I dressed and came away at once; and here I found him.’ This was the most striking of the testimonies uttered, but it was followed by something still more striking. After two or three others had spoken, the same woman, now seated, broke out into a shrill but not unpleasing chant. The sounds were evidently articulate. It might have been a language in which she was singing; the open vowel sounds preponderated. For a few minutes—under five—she continued her strain, under the influence of a strong excitement, which left her somewhat wearied-looking. Her eyes were now very bright, and her cheek bones marked out by a flush which contrasted with the paleness of her face. The strain was pathetic, a wail of aspiration in it. A hymn to Jesus sung just so would be impressive in a mission service.

“When she had finished the presiding elder, who seemed rather annoyed by the incident, quietly asked if anyone could interpret; but as no one could, he waited for another testimony or two, and then dismissed us.

“Yours truly,
“ALEXANDER MACKENNAL.”

His eschatology was frankly universalist, but he shrank from dogmatism regarding it, nor would he urge his views

on others. In reply to difficulties in the way of such views presented by some of the sayings of Christ he would urge the Kenosis,—“God does not wish to give us dogmatic statements regarding the future. Such statements would invalidate the highest moral choice.”

In his view of the Communion he was no Zwinglian. “We commemorate a dead person, we commune with a living person.” The Lord’s Supper is a part of Communion. “I will not say He speaks here as He cannot elsewhere, but I am sure He does speak here if I seek Him in conscious obedience to His command.” He would use the word “impartation” of divine life. It is not merely the power of our thought which is at work. There is an objective impartation of the higher life and will. “We are lifted up more and more as we are fit.” “When I sit down at the Lord’s Table or join the church do not let my uppermost thought be ‘What shall I gain?’ but let me strive to lose myself in the large sense of brotherhood and fellowship.”

“As for orders,” he said, “I would not go to the garden gate to have my orders recognised. I detest the pride of orders. When an assembly of men filled with this spirit comes together there is always the potentiality of much mischief.” “Protestantism must not be reduced to the right of every man to say his own prayers. In speaking of the privilege of prayer we sometimes forget to lay upon our people the duty of intercessory prayer for others.”

In conversation, as in public speeches on the Free Church Federation platform, Mackennal would refuse to go beyond the advocacy of federation. Sometimes he would disappoint those who wanted to see a prospect of a Free Evangelical Church of England, including all the existing Free Churches, but he did so deliberately and in accordance with his conviction. His forecasts as

to union were (1) that there would be two Methodist churches in England, one where the democratic and lay element predominated, and one where the clerical element was supreme. (2) He did not expect within any measurable period the union of Congregationalists and Baptists, but he thought it much more likely that the next fifty years would see a union of Congregationalists and Presbyterians. In a conversation which arose out of Dr. Robertson Nicoll's frequent references to Robertson Smith he said, "I wonder if Nicoll ever considers that if Robertson Smith had lived much longer he would have found it impossible to reconcile his critical views with his Calvinistic doctrine of Atonement." Mr. Moncrieff replied that he had foreseen for some years that this conflict would come for many. "Yes," said Dr. Mackennal, "but he will be a rash man who will precipitate it."

He accepted the methods of the higher criticism very early, but was cautious about the results; he said that in his youth he had defended Bishop Colenso. One Wednesday evening he startled the quiet congregation by reading a chapter from Ecclesiastes and opening his address thus: "There is a remarkable amount of acuteness in this book, but what a lot of rubbish it contains!" He thought that the Epistle of James was very badly translated in the Revised Version. This was a favourite epistle with him, and he thought it impossible to translate it into the nineteenth century idiom. The Broad Church party in the Church of England, he said, has ceased to exist; the Free Churches are doing the work they failed to do.

The present writer happened to be a member of the same party as Dr. Mackennal crossing from New York to Liverpool in the *Teutonic* after the Congregational Council in 1899. Both had a taste for a walk on deck before

breakfast, and we had many good talks on subjects in which he was interested. It was then I realised how large, vital, and spiritual his conception of the Christian Church was. As far as my own experience goes, I have found no one else who could talk so weightily and wisely on this subject. He had a habit of using Mrs. Lyttelton Gell's "Cloud of Witness" to promote meditation in the morning. Mrs. Gell was the niece of the late Warden of Merton College, Oxford, and kept house for him when I was a Mertonian. When Dr. Mackennal found that I had known her and seen the collection as it grew, he told me that he had written to her thanking her for the breadth and catholicity of her selections. She replied saying, as devout Anglicans often do, that where there is such deep agreement in essentials, there ought to be unity in externals, and deplored the divisions created by Nonconformity. His reply was characteristic. He reminded her that the onus of separation lay with the body which had raised secondary matters to the place of essentials, and had excluded Nonconformists on the ground of difference in the things she held unessential. If the Church removed the barriers she had erected, union might not be impossible.

In February of 1904 I spent an hour or two with him at Bowdon. We had a long and interesting talk about the need and difficulty of maintaining in the modern pulpit the witness to spiritual truth, which is an essential part of the work of the Church of Christ. Some of his sayings I can recall. "By spiritual truth," he said, "I mean that behind every truth of ethics there is an ontological reality." "The important thing is to preach spiritual truth, not merely as truth in a propositional sense, but as reserve force." Speaking of the power of binding and loosing in the Christian Church, he said, "I have recently been impressed with the extreme simplicity and naturalness of

our Lord's instructions to His disciples. 'Go,' He said, do your best; what you do on earth will have eternal validity; it shall be ratified in heaven.' "

Dr. Mackennal had an interest in colonial missions which dated back at least to the days when he was a minister at Surbiton. He was a close personal friend of Mr. Fielden, the secretary of the Colonial Missionary Society, and from Surbiton carried on a prolonged correspondence with him about the condition of the Congregational churches in Australia. It was not till 1894 that Dr. Mackennal became a director of the Colonial Missionary Society, but from that time till the end of his life he was closely identified with the work of the society. When he was on his Canadian journey in 1898, of which his letters give such a full and interesting account, he became much interested in the Congregational churches of Canada. He was impressed with the difference of religious atmosphere between towns where there were Congregational churches and towns where there were none. "It is a simple fact that in such places ecclesiastical authority, credal narrowness, denominational exclusiveness, are still found, and if we were to discontinue our churches there would be many lapses from grace. Congregationalism is a mode of church life to be exhibited, as well as a church doctrine to be practised. It is, as the Governor of Alberta told me, an influence always to be counted on in political and social advancement. And the fact that the very success of our brethren in Congregationalising the other denominations keeps their own numbers small, gives them an abiding claim on our sympathy."

When he was at Glacier, in the Rocky Mountains, he was urged by a lady in the hotel to conduct a service on Sunday. Though the notice was short, the news soon spread, and on Sunday morning there was an interested

congregation. The farmers and others who came found it so good to be there that they continued to meet, until the Presbyterian authorities, always watchful and alert in Canada, established a church there.

It was natural to Dr. Mackennal's large-minded and statesmanlike view of Congregationalism that he should see colonial church extension as of one piece with the work of Congregationalism in England. One of the last things he did was to write an appeal for the removal of the debt on the Canadian churches, and he purposed to write a history of the Colonial Society from its foundation.

He admitted the growth of distinctly collectivist views in his mind during the last twenty years of his life. He had been compelled to widen his idea of the function of the State. "If we had several generations of altruism," he said, "it would be as difficult to think of a self-centred life as at present it seems to many to think of an altruistic one." In 1897 he spoke of the Manchester school as having accomplished a great work, but as now being dead. "Its present legacy is the high spirit of philanthropy it created."

Sitting at table, someone remarked on the tyranny of trades unions. "Yes," he replied, "but have you considered what a testimony that is to the workman's experience of the alternative tyranny? Consider what it means that workmen prefer to bear all that you describe in the loss of freedom rather than leave themselves to the tender mercies of employers."

He was fond of discussing literature and its influence in his own life. He owed much to the eighteenth century essayists, who gave him a sense of style. Coleridge, whose books he read and re-read, had an enduring influence on his thinking. Bushnell, Maurice and F. W. Robertson came next to Coleridge as formative influences. He

thought little of Henry Rogers, and said Hutton had given him his deserts in the "Hard Church." "The true Christian minimises differences in opinion and seeks harmony of fellowship; Rogers always seems to emphasise differences." He admitted the high place of Carlyle and Ruskin in English literature, but he could not admire either. They were too rhetorical. This also was one of his criticisms of Dale's style; he thought that the rhetorical taint in "The Atonement" was one of its blemishes. Dale had formed his style on Burke, whereas no one could be exact in Burke's periods. He read R. L. Stevenson with pleasure, but called him a dilettante. He may have had a true love for Scotland, but had not the Scottish strength of character. He thought Dr. Parker had gained much in dignity and power of character towards the end of his life. He said once of Dr. Guinness Rogers, "He is a perfect friend. If I were in trouble through no fault of my own there are many to whom I could go for help. If I were in trouble through my own fault I should go to Rogers."

All those who knew Mackennal well felt that it was necessary sometimes to defend him against the popular judgment which pronounced him "cold" or "masterful" or "reserved and distant." Anyone who reads his letters or notes the testimony of his friends will be amazed that such a judgment was possible. But there was, in truth, a reserve in his manner which the simple and cordial habits of the north failed to understand, and which supplied the residuum of truth which is generally found at the root of a popular impression. The history of such a manner associated with an affectionate and generous temperament is easily understood. A man begins life by giving his affection freely and generously. He finds many people ready to take advantage of his affection, but very few to reciprocate

it ; he discovers that he is paying sovereigns in exchange for others' sixpences, and that at that rate he is risking early bankruptcy. His generous sympathies and unselfish affections come back to him broken-winged from some encounter with the corporate selfishness of some organisation he has tried to serve, or the self-seeking of someone he has trusted and tried to help. Gradually he withdraws behind a protecting reserve as a measure of self-preservation, gives himself with increasing caution to persons and causes, and exacts some testimony to the sincerity and freedom from selfish motives of those who make demands on him.

Many of Dr. Mackennal's friends thought he was a man much misunderstood. "He seemed to have a surface aloofness. In reality he was one of the most affectionate of men. He was the truest of friends. His was a large, broad, generous nature." This is all true ; but it was an evidence of the sensitiveness and understanding of the popular mind, rather than the reverse, that people felt when they heard him speak that they did not meet on terms of perfect mutual confidence. He had nothing of the demagogue in his nature. A true demagogue makes the people believe in him because he believes in the people, and if he be a good man as well as a demagogue he induces them to act on a higher level of motive than their own. Mackennal believed in the people as redeemed by Christ ; in them lay the hope of the world for him ; but apart from the appeal to the spiritual mind and the enlightened conscience, his attitude to popular movements as such was rather that of the papal legate in Browning's "Soul's Tragedy," who had seen "four-and-twenty leaders of revolt." This estimate is borne out by sayings reported in a letter from Mr. Maconachie :—

" . . . He once made to me an illuminating remark

about Thackeray, which shed a side-light upon his own character: 'The cynicism which is attributed to Thackeray is nothing but the self-protecting veil thrown out by a peculiarly sensitive nature.' The same was true, I am certain, of his own marked reserve, so far as that was instinctive and involuntary. So far as it was deliberate, his reserve was grounded on the absolute sincerity which was, I think, the keystone of his great character. He loved reality and valued it above all else. From this reason he shrank from over-expression, and his speech seemed at times cold and colourless by contrast with current habits of adjectival and adverbial excess. But his *yea* was *yea*, and, if he only signed his letters '*yours truly*' it was not from lack of cordiality, but because attempts to qualify truth are of the evil one.

"His distrust of the rhetorical instinct, with its tendency to falsetto and exaggeration, was profound, and is well illustrated by an incident he told me of himself and the late R. W. Dale. As he and Dr. Dale were about to enter a crowded session of the Congregational Union, they paused at the noise of resounding cheers. 'I never,' said Dr. Mackennal, 'hear applause without saying to myself, "What fallacy is that?"' 'Mackennal, you're wrong,' cried his friend, almost turning upon him. 'You should trust the feeling of the people,' with more to the same effect. "I remember with what sadness he went on to speak of the shadow thrown over Dr. Dale's later years by the coldness of the same assembly to him for some time after the Unionist division. But if Dr. Mackennal set small store by excitement, he was to be found steadily working for the end in view after the excitement had long died down."

To see how such a mind thinks and works, a letter to Dr. Dale already published may be quoted. The letter was

written at the time when the Congregational Union would hardly listen to the voice of the man who had so often been their pride, owing to his attitude on the Irish question:—

“ BOWDON, 2nd May, 1894.

“ A sentence or two in your letter give me the opportunity of saying what I have long wanted to say, but shrank from thrusting on your notice.

“ I regret very much that we have not the benefit of your leadership and the help to many of our convictions, and much of our action, which would come from your agreement with us.

“ But I have again and again thanked God, when reading extracts from your sermons and references to your public utterances, as these have been reported, that He was vouchsafing you an intensive force which more than compensated for the loss of your general influence and supervision.

“ I am not afraid to say to you—for I am recognising the Divine source rather than thinking of your personal gifts and aptitudes—that you are doing a work now which marks you out as one of the Father’s elect. You once said, I remember, ‘ When God has confidence in one of His children, He is able to give him whatever he would like ’—this in reference to the story of Mr. Spurgeon and the opal ring, &c. I trust you have something of this experience; but there is another truth which you must not forget—‘ Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.’ And your seclusion, painful as it is, is only a hiding in the secret of His tabernacle.

“ I would also suggest to you that you need not look at your present gainfulness through loss as casting any suspicion on the rightness of your former very active life. Who knows if you would have found so much of God in your seclusion if you had not sought to serve Him out in the open?

“ Forgive these bold speculations on you and yours; they are not irreverent. Nor am I presuming to lecture; but I should like to come in on the side of those thoughts of your own which may be hopeful rather than of those which may be despondent.”

Combined with a critical attitude towards movements merely popular, was the kind of dominant temper which comes to a mind which exacts sterner methods of thought from itself than the common standard. This note of a predominant personality would sometimes emerge unex-

pectedly at a church meeting and give an impression that he ruled autocratically. Once it was, "If any one proposes to appeal to the Trust Deed I place my resignation in your hands." At another, when things had gone against his wishes, "Well! manage it yourselves! manage it yourselves!" The consciousness that this vein was in the pastor, and might emerge unexpectedly, tended to suppress spontaneity and freedom in the life of the church; but it also prevented the church meetings from being soured by debate or victimised by faddists.

In his later years he commonly began his Wednesday evening addresses sitting down, like a Jewish Rabbi surrounded by disciples; then as he got roused by his subject he would stand up and remain standing to the end. He was annoyed on these occasions by the common habit on the part of those who came to the meeting, of sitting at the back of the room and leaving the chairs vacant at the front. Once after the meeting had begun he summoned a deacon, sent for the church attendant and with due solemnity, pointing to the front row of chairs, said, "Garner, remove these chairs." That settled the matter for the time. His Wednesday addresses were fully and carefully prepared, and those who heard him to the end agreed that they were never so rich in thought and feeling as during the last year of his life.

He had his share of the comic spirit, and retained to the last a vein of humour which gave his judgments on men and things almost a caustic flavour. "Congregationalism in Scotland is apt to be understood as the right of every man to speak on every subject at every church meeting." "No, tell Mr. —, I cannot have anything to do with schemes of that kind. He should go to Mr. —, of —, who will supply him with a scheme for abolishing the National Debt if he gives him an hour's notice."

HYPOPHOSPHATES AT CRIEFF.

“ CRIEFF, 2nd September, 1896.

“ This house is very full, and I have found several friends here, two of them intimate friends, with whom I have frequently stayed in London. There is one funny custom. After prayers at night there is a rush to the lobby, where two large kettles, big enough to boil a salmon, are on a table, full of hot water. Of this the people drink. A few take their mugs of hot water into their bedrooms, and, as a friend of mine said, ‘ there is a good deal of *shaving* at night.’ He himself was seen by a Glasgow baillie, as he was retiring to his room ; and as the baillie’s eyes looked interrogation, my friend said, ‘ I’m going to take my hypophosphates.’ ‘ Well,’ said the man ‘ I’ve heard it called many names, but this is new.’ ”

“ BOWDON, 8th November, 1895.

“ You may perhaps like to know something about our conference yesterday at London House. The Bishop of London received us, and there were present the Bishop of Durham, Bishop of Winchester—whom I had met at Archdeacon Sinclair’s—Bishop of Chester, St. Asaph, Rochester—with whom I lunched at Talbot Baines’s, in Leeds ; also Cardinal Vaughan, Dr. Martineau, Donald McLeod, and a good Scotch representation ; Dr. Dykes, Price Hughes, Dr. T. B. Stephenson and some other Wesleyans ; Theodore Neild, Joshua Rowntree, and one or two other Friends ; F. B. Meyer, Urijah Thomas, Morley Wright, Dr. Paton, Short of Salisbury, Morris of Ipswich, and some more.

“ We went on quite smoothly at first, but at last came a clear difference of opinion. We agreed that the sale of liquors should be referred to local decision, as to prohibition, or limitation, but when the question came—or management ?—there was a dead-lock. The Bishops, Cardinal Vaughan, Archdeacon Wilson, Joshua Rowntree, and all the Scotchmen were of opinion that localities should have power to transact the liquor business, if they would. Price Hughes was equally pronounced on the point that the Temperance Societies would resist such a proposal to the last ; and he aroused great irritation by his mode of speech. Clifford and Paton were as distinct as he in their affirmation that it wouldn’t do, but they conciliated and didn’t provoke. The funny thing was that every one there, nearly, seemed personally in favour of giving local liberty to try the Gothenburg scheme, but the fear that the teetotallers outside would feel sold and would bitterly resent it, was very evident. Then the Bishop of London came in, and in a most masterly way, steered us into smooth waters. First he affirmed the principle of local

option, and that for such local option to be effective there must be a choice between various methods. Then it was resolved to petition the Queen for a joint committee of both Houses to enquire into these various methods. And then by a third resolution we referred other matters to the enquiry of that committee. Of course, every one knows that the first 'method' to be enquired into is prohibition, the second limitation, and the third management. But as management is not specified, and the conference did not distinctly say Gothenburg, or the Bishop of Chester's scheme, it is presumed the teetotallers will be content. I think they will, and that good will come of the enquiry.

"It was a very remarkable conference, and to have reached unanimity so far was a great thing. The Archdeacon of Manchester called the conference 'unique,' and hoped that it would not then and there break up and no more be heard of it; so a committee was formed to carry into effect the resolutions, and call the conference together again if necessary.

"The company was a distinguished one; and it was abundantly interesting and entertaining. Donald McLeod had all the Moderator's pepperiness. Price Hughes's oratorical habit carried him away. The Bishop of Chester was anxious; my Lord of London admirable, but when he got warm with his success he lectured us as if we had been the Rugby Sixth Form, and addressed Cardinal Vaughan and Archdeacon Wilson as if they were head boys. You never saw such a mean looking set of legs as the Bishops'; they looked as if their owners were all just coming out of influenza.

"To-day I have interviewed two members of Parliament, one of them a member of Cabinet in the late Government. There was fun in that too. The post is going, and I must stop."

The two following letters illustrate Mackennal's vivid memories of Cornwall. The first is part of a letter to Mr. Jesse Haworth, written in 1881:—

"... I am not too busy to say how glad I am that you are enjoying Cornwall; and I send this to the Post Office, Penzance, in hope of your receiving it.

"I am especially glad that you like Bude, because Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lee, whom I recommended to go there, were disappointed with it; and I feared that my taste might be failing. Boscastle I was sure you would enjoy. I, alas! only stayed a couple of hours there. I was afraid you are allowing yourselves too short a time for the Lizard. On both sides the promontory there are delightful

coves to be lived among rather than visited. And the accommodation, I believe, is good, though perhaps sometimes a little primitive.

"If you have any time to spare in Truro, and would like to see a bit of natural sea sand, get yourselves driven to Perran—Perranzabuloe is the full name, that is, Periun in sabulo, Periun in the sand. That is the place to which I am wanting to take all my children for six weeks, as soon as they are old enough for the long journey. We used to go there as children, and I believe the last thirty or forty years have made little difference in it.

"At Penzance, you will find what to do with your time. If you can spare a day for Gurnard's Head, drive by Madion, Lanyon, Cromlech and the Downs on which are the written stone, &c.; get your driver to go round by Morvah Cliffs and to let you down where the view of the cliffs is to be got. There is a driver, Nankivell, who knows the place well, and is very polite. . . ."

The second letter was written to his sister fifty-eight years after he left Cornwall :—

"FOWEY HOTEL, FOWEY, 28th August, 1903.

"You will be, I am sure, interested in what Will and I have been doing for the last ten days in Cornwall.

"On Tuesday evening of last week we reached Truro and put up at the Red Lion, where we stayed until last Tuesday, when we came on here.

"I found Truro greatly changed and mostly for the better. The one point in which the change is for the worse is the closing of so many of the old rights of way. That through the almshouses in Pydur Street is shut up, on the plea of preventing infection when an attack of fever was harassing the town. The old way past the Mill Pond is blocked, because it would lead through the cathedral works. In London they have not ventured to block certain rights of way between the Strand and Holborn, although the renovation of streets is proceeding on the largest scale.

"The number of new houses built on all the heights about the city is considerable, and many of the houses are excellent in size and character. We did not go west of Redruth, but everywhere there were signs of prosperity. The children looked well-fed and well-clothed, and there was not that delicacy on the part of the women of the poorer condition which I remember so well. Every year some worthy member of our Cornish Club issues an appeal for charity, with the declaration that the people are becoming poorer and poorer. I shall have something to say on that point at our next dinner.

"We went twice on the water—one day down the Fal to Falmouth and back ; I have never seen the river look so beautiful : the various reaches as you came in sight of them were more clothed with verdure than they used to be. I had to remind myself that in 60 years time trees grow a great deal. Another day we took train to Falmouth, sailed to St. Mawes and Percuil, where we got a carriage to Gerrans and Portscatha. This was very beautiful. The look-out on the sea, with the further side of the bay as a background was singularly beautiful, I think owing largely to the deep blue of the sea.

"Last Saturday we went to Redruth, and walked up Carn Brea, thence on to Carn Marth, and down by Gwennap Pit to Redruth again. Carn Brea never loses its charm ; the granite rocks are so impressive. It is very difficult not to believe that the Druids used them for sacrifices. From Carn Marth we could see on the North Channel from Padstow Point to St. Ives Bay, with Portreath in the middle ; on the South Channel, Falmouth Harbour was open and the sea stretching away east and west. We could see Truro Cathedral, the china clay works at St. Austell, and Plymouth headland.

"The day we spent at Perran was wet, as was yesterday, which we spent at Newquay ; but nothing can prevent your admiring the sands and rocks of these places if you can see them at all.

"I would not make myself known in Truro until Sunday evening, lest I should be called on to preach. We went to Kenwyn church on Sunday morning, and had a nice simple service with a very good sermon from Archdeacon Cornish—no relation of Dr. Cornish. In the evening I went to Bethesda, and again heard an excellent sermon from the minister. I saw Miss Norton there, the only person in the church I had ever spoken to before. We had tea with her and her brother the next evening, after lunching with a Mr. and Mrs. Hicks, who live in the house directly behind Mr. Morris's house. It was the house in which Britton used to live. Mr. Hicks's father had also lived in it, I suppose after Britton had left it. One of the Tweedies also, Robert or William, lived in it.

"I am greatly interested in Tresidder's nursery, in the old spot, but very differently stocked. One of the grandchildren of the old Tresidder has been in Australia, and he brought home with him certain notions of what a southern garden should be like. There is an avenue bordered with tree-ferns growing in the open air, and a pond arranged to look like an Australian pond. I remembered mostly your going up there to buy me a geranium to wear in my buttonhole on Speech Day. It was the first fancy geranium I had ever seen.

"The river is much improved ; they have banked up the mudbanks

with oak faggots, and so deepened the channel. And all the bank in front of Sunny Corner, several acres in extent, is being reclaimed. Part of it is already turned into a public garden.

"I found no one whom I know except Miss Norton and her brother, with the exception of an old verger in the Cathedral. I think I must have been the oldest man in Truro, and he was born in 1835. It was like Rip van Winkle talking of people whom no one remembered.

"We return home on Tuesday, leaving here on Monday."

All these separate strains of character, unlike as they are to one another, were held in a beautiful harmony by the predominant saintliness of Mackennal's character and life. The strongest impression he made on those who came near him was that he was a man of God. He read the New Testament through three times every year, and the Gospels five times in a year in Greek, and so kept himself steadily in sight of the Author and Perfecter of his faith. His conversation was enriched by the constant presence of New Testament ideas and habits of thought, and he gave one the impression more than anyone I have met, of having thought himself into the atmosphere of the Gospels. I have a copy of a book in which he was much interested, "Pro Christo et Ecclesia," annotated by himself. The annotations are full of shrewd, incisive comment, corrections of the author's standpoint, and equally clear endorsements of his position when he seems to hit the mark. He must have known the Greek of the four Gospels practically by heart.

CHAPTER XXIII

A CONSUMMATE CORRESPONDENT

“Loved I not his letters full of beauty?”—BROWNING.

IT is not necessary after the letters published in this volume to say that Dr. Mackennal was a skilful correspondent, but some of the evidences of his skill which are scattered among the letters he kept are of more than personal interest:—

I. LETTERS TO DR. MACKENNAL.

“BIRMINGHAM, 10th November, 1875.

“My dear MACKENNAL,

“I write to thank you for your very kind and generous notice of my lectures in the *Nonconformist* of this morning. If to any ministers reading the book it brings an assurance—as you think it may—that the death of Christ should be preached as the ground of human forgiveness, my chief object in writing the book will be accomplished. The development of the theory in the last two lectures was to myself quite a subordinate matter, though I thought it might help some people.

“I don’t quite understand as yet all your criticisms, for which I am not less grateful than for the earlier part of the notice; but I shall think them over. It was a relief to me to find that you did not raise the objection which was urged against my position the other day by a man for whose judgment I have a great respect. He said that he understood me to deny that the death of Christ had any value as a divine appeal to the human heart—that I was hostile to the idea that it has a great function in assuring us of the divine love. Because I maintained that it is not *only* this, he supposed that I contended that it is not this at all. I thought that I had put the case, so far as this point was concerned, clearly enough at starting—though on reflection I was obliged to acknowledge to myself that as it never occurred to me that any one could imagine that I denied its

moral power, I might possibly have omitted to say distinctly enough that I recognised it.

“ You will be glad to hear that one thousand four hundred copies have gone. This sale, within six months of a twelve shilling book is very satisfactory. We hope to get out a cheaper edition almost immediately.

“ Faithfully yours,

“ R. W. DALE.”

From Bishop WELLDON :—

“ HARROW SCHOOL, *June 3rd, 1887.*

“ Allow me to thank you for your letter. It appears to me that in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit which the Christian churches have strangely lost to view, lies the solution of many difficulties which at the present day encompass the faith of Christ.

“ I would gladly send you my MS. if I could ; but it was not preached from notes, and I have not seen any report of it.

“ Believe me very faithfully yours,

“ J. E. C. WELLDON.”

From W. E. GLADSTONE (autograph) :—

“ *June 9th, 1887.*

“ I am unable to point out how a copy of my letter to Bishop Skinner can be obtained. I think it was once reprinted under the auspices of Canon MacColl of Ripon.

“ No Nonconformist, I believe, expects Disestablishment from me more than from any other man of a past generation.

“ Yours obediently and faithfully,

“ W. E. GLADSTONE.”

From Professor ARMITAGE :—

“ *January 5th, 1888.*

“ I should just like to say before leaving Bowdon this morning how thankful I am for all the life in the church here, and how glad I am that you are carrying forward the work which you indicated at Leeds. I was interested too in Mr. Crossley’s plea for an open confession of self-dedication to the highest work, and was very glad of the bold way in which you invited the congregation to seek light on this matter with a view to immediate action, if such action should present itself as right to their consciences. I was reminded of the sentence in your Leeds address that our Independent churches were founded on the right of confession in assemblies of saints. I have for some time now felt that our more spiritual churches (such as yours) will have to lead the way out of the smothering ‘ respectability ’

into which we have largely sunk; and I have hoped that they would set at nought the tradition of procedure which is lying with leaden weight upon our assemblies, 'lest one good custom should corrupt our world.' . . .

"Mr. Crossley walked home with me last night, and said how thankful he was that you had spoken as you did after his little address.

"I have been told to-day that Mrs. S. and others say that he had better leave Congregationalism and give himself wholly to work with the Salvation Army. I should think that on the other hand it would be deplorable if Congregationalism had no room for such men, and such ideals as his are. I dread lest it should ever have to be said of modern Congregationalism as Baldwin Brown used to say of the Established Church, that again and again it had purged out its most zealous and enthusiastic members from its communion. I remember that you spoke in the same sense at Leeds. There's no doubt about it, I am afraid, that we have got a dreadful lot of Whiggishness amongst us, and that Radicals—in any department of living—are to-day only amongst us on sufferance. I rejoice that you are setting up a standard round which they may rally, and I wish you a very prosperous year."

From Dr. BERRY:—

"May 15th, 1888.

" . . . I am sincerely grateful for your words of generous appreciation, they will encourage me to go on; they will help me in those oft-returning and fearful hours when I deny to myself any power to preach and any right to claim the attention of men.

"To what you say on the subject of my health I would fain give as much practical attention as I do attach supreme importance. But alas for me, how am I to do it? I am already in a state of nervous exhaustion, having preached night after night (ten of them in succession at my own special mission) in spite of insomnia and daily sickness. On one point I am resolute—I am refusing all further work: but my present engagements are legion and carry me, with the exception of six weeks during August—September, to the end of the year. I may have been foolish, but the pressure that has been put upon me has been enormous. Some of our good brethren require a word of friendly rebuke for their lack of thoughtfulness on matters of this kind. However, I am not complaining—I will do the best I can, and will use such care of myself as is possible under the circumstances.

"I was delighted with your avowal of faith in respect of the broad

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men, and with what you say touching your own preaching. Never, in my opinion, were our men more loyal to the facts and message of God's gospel than to-day ; and none are so able to bear them to their fellows as the men who have broken away from old forms to get at the older realities.

" May God bless you for your kind word to me—I cannot tell you how much it means to me of help. That your own ministry may be granted to us for many years to come in the heightening power of a thoughtful simplicity is the prayer of

" Yours sincerely,

" CHARLES A. BERRY."

From Dr. GRIFFITH JOHN, on the occasion of his nomination and election to the chair of the Congregational Union :—

" HANKOW, July 9th, 1888.

" How can I thank you enough for the kind and brotherly letter which you have sent me. I have never received a commendation from any one which has touched my heart more. Please accept my very best thanks.

" The news of my election came upon me as a great surprise. I had seen in the papers that my name had been suggested, and among other letters, I had read yours in the *Nonconformist*. But it never seemed to me that anything would or could come out of the suggestion.

" After the news reached us, I felt it to be my duty to take the matter into my most serious and prayerful consideration. For a whole fortnight my mind dwelt upon it constantly, and I had to pass through a great mental conflict before coming to a final decision. That decision I telegraphed to Mr. Thompson on the 4th inst. It gave me a real pang to send that telegram, and the thought that the directors of my Society, and very many friends besides, will be sorely disappointed, is still giving me deep pain. I believe, however, that I have been guided of God. I asked Divine guidance, and I am convinced that I have done what God would have me do. I have given Dr. Hannay and Mr. Thompson my reasons for declining the honour which the members of the Union have sought to confer on me. I can hardly expect my friends to be satisfied with them, for they cannot see with my eyes and feel with my heart ; but all who know me will not hesitate to credit me with a singleness of aim, and a supreme desire to do the will of God. For the present I must not leave China, if I would be loyal to my convictions of duty. Moreover, I do not feel equal to the duties which would devolve upon me as Chairman of the Congregational Union.

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"In so far as my election is an indication of a growing interest in foreign missions on the part of the churches, I rejoice in it with unfeigned joy. In so far as it is a mark of respect for and confidence in the noble Society to which I have the great honour to belong, I thank God devoutly for it. I could only wish the choice of the Union had fallen upon some other brother missionary, more worthy of the honour than I am, and better able to discharge the duties connected with it.

"Very sincerely do I thank the members of the Congregational Union for the great distinction they have conferred upon me, and deeply do I regret my inability to show my gratitude in the way that would be most pleasing to them.

"I thank you, dear Dr. Mackennal, for the interest you have taken in my nomination, and for writing to me in the way you have done. I am exceedingly sorry that it is not in my power to accept your call. I feel sure, however, that God means something by this, and that He will bring good out of it, good to you there, and good to us here.

"We are now in the midst of the great heat, and we find it very trying. We are all in good health, and working with all our might. Pray for us.

"I am,
"Yours very sincerely,
"GRIFFITH JOHN."

From His Excellency the United States Ambassador:—

"January 2nd, 1897.

"Your most welcome note and the 'Story of the English Separatists' went to London whilst I was passing the Christmas season in Yorkshire—and on my way through London I found it, and brought it down here into Sussex. Indeed, Sir, I am grateful to have you write me in a strain of such sympathy and approval, and I value highly your words of kindness and good-will.

"Although I responded readily and with sincere desire to pay respect to the memory of Pastor John Robinson, yet I was not unaware that in New England there are many of Puritan descent who would have preferred another orator, and one who would have dwelt less upon the simple God-fearing man who led the exodus to Leyden, and more upon the descendants in our own day of the little handful he sent to Massachusetts Bay. Nevertheless, I am not able to believe that any one with a mind more single, and more anxious to honour that true servant of God, John Robinson, could have stood and spoken at the corner stone of his Memorial Church in Gainsborough, than he who undertook the duty.

"I value your book, and have been already impressed and interested in it, and I thank you sincerely for sending it to me before I embark for home.

"With hesitation, I am sending you by this post, a copy of an address I made in Edinburgh a year ago, very fragmentary and imperfect, in which I think you will find some seeds of thought from which you will not dissent. I send it with sincere respect and regard.

"Faithfully yours,
"J. F. BAYARD."

From the Rev. Canon A. T. LYTTTELTON:—

"September 27th, 1898.

"I hope you have not thought my delay in answering your very kind letter was due to any indifference to it. I have been quite overwhelmed with letters, and am only beginning to cope with them. It was a very great pleasure to read your warm words of sympathy and hopefulness; I can only trust that I may be able to live and work in their spirit. I cannot say how pleasant it has been to me to co-operate in common causes with those whom, like yourself, I heartily respect without entire agreement. My wife joins me in thanking you for your letter.

"May I thank you also for the general tone and tendency of your letter in this morning's *Guardian*? I tried to support the Archdeacon's scheme when he first published it, and I still realise that in that direction lies the solution of this troublesome question. You will, perhaps, think me infected prematurely with the episcopal spirit when I say that I do not quite read the Bishop's utterance as you do; but I need not go into that now.

"Yours very truly,
"A. T. LYTTTELTON."

From Dr. ALEXANDER MACLAREN:—

"February 20th, 1902.

"It was very good of you to send me your greetings on my birthday, and I would have said so before now, but that I was in Scotland all last week tramping about through cruel, cold and black fog, like a Buddhist beggar, for our 20th Century Fund—a wise proceeding for a man of seventy-six! The Scotch Baptists were as frozen as the weather, and not a trickle of subscription would run. I feel that it is high time for me to retire, and am at my wits' end to know what is right to do. But I suppose I must wait till the Pillar moves.

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"I congratulate you on having done your delicate task at Eccles so well. I could not screw myself to accept the Canon's kind invitation, but I am very glad that you did.

"Yours affectionately,

"ALEXANDER MACLAREN."

The concluding sentence refers to an address given in the Eccles Parish Church at the request of Canon Cremer. It was one of a series in which Canon Cremer asked "representatives of the different daughters of the Church of England to tell what they consider to be the contributions to the general stock of Christian truth and life made by the particular movement to which each of them is attached." This was a bold step for the representatives of one reputed to be a hard step-mother, but the daughters reciprocated, and the series was pronounced a success. Mackennal's contribution was particularly good.

From the Rev. R. J. CAMPBELL:—

"April 17th, 1903.

"Amongst the number of letters received from my friends in reference to the call to the City Temple, none has given me more sincere gratification and help than yours. Your kind words of warning I shall not lightly esteem. Your position as a father in the churches gives you a special right to speak. In some degree the warning comes a little too late. The experience of the last few years has taught me that it is easy to draw upon physical capital. Now I mean to try to avoid some of the enormous strain under which I have worked during recent years in Brighton and elsewhere. I feel you are right, and that God is better served by the conservation of power in His instruments.

"Yours very sincerely,

"R. J. CAMPBELL."

II. LETTERS FROM DR. MACKENNAL.

THE NEEDS OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

To Mrs. CHAMBERS:—

"I return you Dr. ____'s letter, which I was much interested to read. I shall be very glad if Mr. ____ turns out to be the right man for you. It is very important that you should have a man of

spiritual power, and one able to take the people along with him in practical godliness. I am no more disposed than I ever was to insist on an identical confession of faith, but I do attach supreme importance to a man's having a spiritual faith and not simply intellectual movements.

"I can hardly reply to your letter now, because I am busy preparing for the meeting next week of the Cheshire Union, of which I am now Chairman. I must not, however, omit to say with how much pleasure I read yours. I am not going to speak on 'The Gospel of Perfection' in May, although I may touch on it in October, but I trust that both my addresses will be full of the spirit of it. *The one thing our Congregational churches want is to realise that they are assemblies of saints. The hard thing is to believe it; it is not so hard to be it when once the belief has been fairly apprehended.* I am very glad you have written as you have; every one who helps to keep this subject before me does me a high service. Mark Guy Pearse's 'Thoughts on Holiness' were of very great use to me. I read the book when conducting a mission at Macclesfield, and it cleared my thoughts very markedly. I afterwards gave the book to —. It should be read slowly. But the book that has most delighted me is old Marshall, whose book Mr. — lent you, and which you treated as he treated 'In Memoriam.'

"I am sorry you did not go to Rome, although I was not sorry that your journey was put off. I should not have stopped for the earthquakes, but I didn't think you were well enough to go.

TOLSTOY.

To Mr. LUCAS:—

"BOWDON, July 22nd, 1899.

"You have been good enough to send me a copy of your lecture on Count Tolstoy, and I send you my heartiest thanks for it. I have had a quiet hour this evening for its reading, and the reading of it has been a great pleasure. A few years ago I studied Tolstoy with much interest, and your lecture will send me back to the study with added satisfaction. Somehow, I lacked the key which you have provided me with. The sympathy and admiration which appear in every page you have written are such as should be in every one who would enter into true relations with Tolstoy, and the gratitude I feel to you is that which one, who wishes to have an intelligent appreciation of a good and noble man, must always feel for him who enlarges the sphere of his affectionate impulses, and helps him to find those impulses true."

A Consummate Correspondent 375

TO A MOTHER OF BOYS.

“BOWDON, 3rd June, 1893.

“. . . I do not know any such books as you speak of for boys ; and, indeed, I am not sure that Dr. Pomeroy’s book could be written for young people. Parentage is the end of marriage ; but in all its higher significance, that is one of the latest lessons we learn. To try to anticipate these lessons would be to degrade the whole process. Marriage is a part of religion ; its mysteries are revelations, and are only made known by practical experimental knowledge. There is a kind of profanity in trying to pull out the spiritual beauty of facts which will unfold themselves if we will be patient—trying to force open the bud which time and sunshine and growth will open—and the same sort of profanity is in trying to reveal the hidden treasure of marriage and love to those who have neither the requisite knowledge nor maturity of character.

“You have recognised that in the little tractlet which you sent me yesterday. You could speak to X. in due time, in the same way ; not saying the same things, but pursuing the same patient, gradual way. A boy can understand that the charm of association with girls must be kept free from indelicate thoughts. A young man can understand that the purity of any one in whom he is specially interested is his to watch over as a sacred charge. There are other things about which, in due time, his father can better speak to him—that the incidents of manhood are not sins ; but that out of such incidents come thoughts which, not sinful in themselves, it is a sin to encourage and please oneself with.”

CONSOLATION.

“BOWDON, 25th November, 1887.

“. . . I did not venture in that special time of difficulty through which you have passed to say many words of sympathy, for it seemed to me that you were in one of those conflicts which are inevitably solitary. Indeed, it was not sympathy you were craving, not even Divine sympathy, but strength. And I hope you will find yourself stronger for what you have passed through.

“That physical suffering which must be endured, harder as it is to bear than our anticipations, sometimes seems even to bring no lesson with it. And yet, by and by, even it has to do with spiritual fruitfulness ; just as ploughing has to do, as really as sowing, with the crop. You won’t think me hard if I say that it was not with regret, but with hope, that I found no thoughts to communicate that would exactly meet your wants ; it is always so when the Master Himself takes a soul in hand.”

TO A WIDOW: CONSOLATION.

To Mrs. HALL, of Andover, Massachusetts, U.S.A. —

“ BOWDON, 12th January, 1892.

“ It gave me much pain to read in the *Boston Congregationalist* of 31st December, that you had lost your husband for a time. You do not know me; but I met your husband at Plymouth, at the end of the International Council meetings last July, and my association with him was one of the happiest events of a memorable week. I heard him preach, dined with him at a friend’s house, and spent a good deal of time with him in our excursions. He was so bright and fresh, with such a youthful spring about him, so full of purpose looking on into the future, and of hopefulness; everything about him seemed to suggest to one days to come, many days to come; so that it is very hard to think of him as gone from us and called to take no share in the work of the churches that is to be. And to me he was so simply and really Christian; that was the charm of all. I am writing to tell you that his brief Plymouth visit made him loved by several who came to know him there. I should think it was not possible to know him without loving him. And that must make his loss so sad to you. When Mrs. Carlyle died, Carlyle said that the ‘light of life’ was for him ‘as if gone out.’ The light of life is not gone out for you; for the Christ, who was your husband’s light of life, abides. But a very choice reflected light has been taken away. I earnestly pray that you and his children may be enabled so to follow him that the sense of real and unalterable union may overcome the blankness of desolation, and that you may have the faith and the joy of doing good and being good in which you will feel how near souls are to one another, whatever world they inhabit.”

TO BEREAVED PARENTS: CONSOLATION.

“ BOWDON, 2nd September, 1903.

“ The card, telling me of the sorrow you and Mrs. M. have sustained in the death of your child, was sent on to me to Cornwall, reaching me just before setting out on my homeward journey. I have had you both much in my thought, and have earnestly desired and prayed for your consolation.

“ Death is so common a sorrow that we always have many sympathisers in bereavement, but each sufferer bears his own burden. No one can tell how your child endeared himself to you, how your hopes and gratitudes and purposes and forecasts entwined themselves around him, so that the loss of him is never absent from your thoughts. And if we knew all that, even then we could only hint and suggest,

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and blunder on, a little consolation here and there. But God is true, and the human heart clings to Him, all the more since Christ has taught us how to trust.

“I should like to send a special message of sympathy to your wife. Our children are much more our wives’—at least in their childhood—than they are ours. I earnestly commend her to the great source of sympathy.

“I hope you are better. I should be glad to learn that you are really so.”

LITERARY CRITICISM: TO AN AUTHOR.

“BOWDON, 15th September, 1898.

“There was one criticism I let pass, because it seemed to me hyper; but I am not easy without putting it before you.

“In your treatment of the miracles of the gospel, you start with a not unnatural expression of impatience at the necessity of touching the argument. Then you go on to specify what you are going to do; and you develop a line of reasoning of singular dignity and force. You point out the supreme personality of Christ, and the room for the action of a gracious and mighty will in nature. And all this time, the word ‘miracle’ is rising in value in the thought of the reader who follows you. Then you go on to say—substantially—it would be a miracle if there were no such events in Christ’s life. That is to say, after exalting the word till it becomes a precious stone, you use it like a pebble from the street and throw it at your opponent.

“I have put my criticism in large, for it is only by reminding you of the upward march your thought has been taking us along that I can make you feel the shock I felt—as of a splash of cold water—when the word miracle, which had been acquiring so august a significance, was used of a mere incongruity of thought.”

A SERMON APPRECIATION.

“BOWDON, 2nd September, 1902.

“. . . Last Sunday I heard — in my own pulpit. I was much struck with his excellence as a preacher. The principal thing which struck me was the wisdom of his method of treating matters. It was a present-day sermon with nothing asserted which would need to be unlearned, but nothing to awaken even a suspicious man’s suspicion of neology. It was a beautiful sermon, full of inspiring and persuasive truth. And then, with a bit of audacity which was high wisdom, he deliberately defied the logical rule of division—ending his sermon with two clauses, one a genus, one a species. The unthinking would

not perceive the logical lapse ; the thoughtful would see that it conferred distinction and impressiveness on the specific application, which was important enough to justify the disregard of technical propriety. I put the matter in this general way that you may understand my belief that the excellence of the sermon was deliberate and not a fluke. But he seemed weak, and I was grieved to see how weak. . . .

“ I am sure you will be very glad to hear such a report of him. . . .”

RECEPTION OF CHURCH MEMBERS ON A GENERAL LETTER OF DISMISSAL.

“ *BOWDON, 19th August, 1901.*

“ It is well to be careful in the matter of dismissals, but I think you will be all right in this case. I gather from what I see in American papers—and I suspect that such a thing occasionally happens in England—that a general letter of dismissal is sometimes given to avoid the unpleasant necessity of discipline. A family coming from Tasmania might have to choose between a general letter, and waiting some months with no church connection. The action of this family is wiser and better than to have left their former church with everything remaining in suspense. I should explain matters to the church, and ask them to vote on this general letter. . . .”

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION QUESTION.

“ *BOWDON, 28th October, 1898.*

“ SIR,—Your courtesy in printing the whole of my last letter invites me to send you a few lines in friendly criticism of the proposals for a uniform national system of education which you so strenuously advocate. I have sought to remove all trace of *invidia* in my representation of the system by describing it, not as a purely secular system, but one in which the teaching of secular subjects by the State is supplemented by the teaching of religion in the schools by the churches. This is the system which received the approval of the Congregational Union as a whole, although some very distinguished Congregationalists dissented. Of these dissentients a few are found advocating the system to-day ; but it is a significant fact that very many more have been converted *from* it than have been converted *to* it.

“ I am inclined to think that we Nonconformists were dwelling, in those days, more on what we could, for the sake of conscience, concede than on what other people could conscientiously accept. The liberty

to establish such schools has not been taken advantage of by the people voting in their localities. There are very few of them in the country ; the majority of our schools are still denominational, and the board school system in common use is that of Bible lessons given by the regular teachers. Very likely many considerations have brought about this result ; but probably few persons would be so bold as to affirm that conscientious scruples, worthy of regard, did not animate a large number of the ratepayers. There is a further fact worth noting in this connection. Many members of school boards who, honestly and very definitely, preferred the secular system with its voluntary supplement, with equal honesty accepted the vote, and have faithfully tried to work the ordinary school board system.

“ I can anticipate a reply—it has already appeared in the *British Weekly*—‘The churches were not ready for their opportunity; because of their indifference, and the unwillingness of the ministers to undertake this new work, the parents had no option between denominational schools or board school religious teaching, and not any religious teaching.’ But was it all indolence, unwillingness ? I think not. In the first place, the churches had not time to fit themselves for this duty. Next, experience of the board school teaching showed how efficient it was ; how little of the religious difficulty was experienced within the schools, notwithstanding the theoretical difficulty of reconciling this teaching with the Nonconformist doctrine of the relation of the State to religion. Moreover, the ministers came to see that it would be very hard, in many cases impossible, for them to teach as well as the trained schoolmasters and mistresses. I frankly confess that I have never been able to give Bible lessons to children’s classes as well as board and British school teachers were doing it. It is a serious objection to the supplementary voluntary religious teaching, that unless we had trained teachers the Bible lessons would always contrast unfavourably with the work of the school.

“ I have been a somewhat close observer of the teachers in public schools, and I have come to set a high estimate on the religious spirit which generally animates them, and on their efficiency as Bible teachers. And my old belief has been rehabilitated—that *it is not enough to teach religion apart from the ordinary school work*. At any moment, a question having a religious bearing may be sprung upon a teacher ; the religious temper should be, as it often is, in the whole conduct of the school. I hope much from raising the standing and self-respect of the schoolmaster ; and I see no surer hindrance to this than to refuse to entrust him with the religious teaching.

“ The real difficulty is not in the board schools, nor the British

schools, nor the denominational schools as such; it is in the clerically dominated schools. *I would call on the law to condemn specific violations of religious liberty in State-aided schools and to punish the violators.* Where necessary, I would refer cases of this sort for trial to the law courts, like violations of the laws regulating Parliamentary elections, giving power to the judges to declare an offender temporarily or permanently disqualified for the office of school manager, just as a man is disfranchised for electoral corruption. But if the control of the law is to be effective in all schools, all schools must be frankly recognised. National schools must always have superior advantages to denominational schools, because they are the nation's own; but a generous system of 'adoption' of other schools would be both safe and fair."

THE EDUCATION QUESTION: COMPROMISE.

To the Rev. D. MACFADYEN:—

"BOWDON, 14th June, 1902.

"... I return your correspondence with Lord Hugh Cecil. All such conferences do good, in so far as they make men acquainted with each other, and remove suspicions from our minds. But I am not hopeful of immediate results. We had a conference in Manchester a few years ago and it came to nothing. You may be interested in reading a reference to it in the enclosed cutting, which destroy when you have done with it.

"Generally I am in accord with your two suggestions. I think I have seen for some years that there is a concession to be made on each side—our friends have to give up the idea of destroying the voluntary—denominational—schools, either by vote of Parliament, or by starving them out. And the Church of England must abandon the idea that the giving up of their buildings for six school days out of the week confers on them the right to a different treatment from that which is meted out to givers of buildings and plant for free libraries, museums, &c. In these cases the public authority to manage is unquestioned, and the management extends to every department of the work the municipality makes itself responsible for.

"The bulk of the talking Nonconformists are not ready for the first; the bulk of talking Churchmen are not ready for the second. And I do not think it good policy to discuss terms of settlement in detail while there is a life and death conflict over an underlying principle.

"If we could get our Nonconformist friends to see that the doctrine of religious equality demands toleration of all varieties of religious belief, and equal treatment of all churches and non-churches

so far as these are loyal to the national constitution ; if we could get the Church people to see also that, in asking them to give up authoritative management, with the final voice, we are only affirming a fundamental doctrine of the revolution settlement, we should have come a long way toward an equitable settlement of details. If we had agreed on these two points, there is no question which a round table conference would not soon settle. But I am afraid it is wholly premature to think of getting the opponents to agree on these lines.

“ I have stated somewhat fully doctrines quite in harmony with what you have laid down. Indeed, I think my first would go further in the way of conciliation than your first ; but I am refraining from publicly uttering them, because I think to do so would only increase the hugger-mugger. There are dissenters who would hoot me down, as surrendering everything ; there are Churchmen who would take a controversial advantage of my concession in No. 1, without saying, or perhaps seeing, that its advocacy by me would be conditioned by their acceptance of No. 2. So long as the Church claims special treatment in virtue of its being a church, there can be no agreement between us.

“ I wish you some success in your endeavours ; if you can win a large success, I shall greatly rejoice.”

CHAPTER XXIV

HYÈRES AND HIGHGATE

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”

“*Creeds pass, rites change, no altar standeth whole,
Yet we her memory, as she pray'd, will keep,
Keep by this: Life in God, and union there.*”

M. ARNOLD.

IN 1903 Dr. Mackennal entered on the last stage of his journey alone. His daughters Euphemia and Margaret were now married, Margaret to Mr. Harold Massey, of Manchester, and Euphemia to Mr. Goodier Haworth, of Bowdon; and Dr. and Mrs. Mackennal had entered with satisfaction into the joy of being grandparents. Of his sons Alec was in a Manchester business, and Will, the youngest, was at Cambridge University. In January, 1903, Mrs. Mackennal was relieved by the gentle hand of death from a prolonged imprisonment in a sickroom. Though her illness had been long and painful, her departure left Dr. Mackennal very lonely. In February, 1903, he wrote to Mrs. Nairn:—

“You will, I am sure, understand the reason of my delay in answering your kind letter. It is not easy to resume old habits when the presence which has been so much in relation to them is removed. I am as one walking in a dream, and often I have been simply still. When I resume work I am soon tired. On Monday week I am starting for a month's stay in the South of France; I hope the sunshine and fresh air and new surroundings may have healing in them.

“So far as my wife's death is concerned, none of us would wish to recall her to undergo that again. Not that there was anything

specially painful in it, but she had had a stroke of paralysis four weeks before her death, and it was sad to see her prisoned and powerless. It was with difficulty she could make herself understood, and so she did not try to speak. She showed a beautiful patience and courage and thoughtfulness for others to the last, but it was a sore trial to her to find herself powerless. The later years of her life have been very ripening years. You will not wonder if I say that life will not be the same again to me. . . .”

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Haworth, who had repeatedly proved themselves such true friends, came to his help with a suggestion that he should spend a few weeks with them at Hyères in the South of France. Mrs. Haworth speaks of these days as among her happiest recollections, and has embodied her impressions of them in the following account :—

“ It was towards the end of the February of 1903, and only a few weeks after the death of his dear wife, that he joined us on the Riviera, at Hyères ; and he came to us in a chastened temper of great sweetness and simplicity, trusting such old friends to understand the sort of natural relief with which he turned to scenes so new and so beautiful, as to a God-given refreshment. He seemed to lift up his head like a comforted child, and allow us to cheer and beguile him as best we might. It was such a flowery land he came to, and such clear and brilliant air, and he smiled and exclaimed at it all, eagerly pointing out its beauties with happy unaffectedness.

“ Of course there were hours when the shadow fell again darkly upon his spirit, but for the most part he gave himself up to the beguilement of a halcyon time, and it seemed as though it became to his desolate heart as ‘ the way of escape,’ that, renewed and strengthened, he might pick up the burden of sorrow again, ‘ able to bear it.’

“ It was his first visit to the Riviera, but his wide culture prepared him to anticipate and recognise

everything, and made him a very delightful companion. Nature spoke to him with a hundred voices, and how he revelled in the flowers and trees! That first ramble we took him, up to the old chateau behind Hyères, how well I remember it! He climbed about like a boy, and called to us with delighted voice continually. Nor shall we forget what the rare garden of the Villa Mortola, between Bordighera and Mentone, was to him a few weeks afterwards, with its rose pergolas, its wonderful aloes, and sedums, and cypresses, and immense variety of flowers, its marvellous distances of land and sea. Someone said, 'This is no ordinary beauty; there is something classic in the feeling of it,' and Dr. Mackennal eagerly assented, realising with pleasure that we were on a classic coast, and in scenes whose wonderful climate and colouring, and stately and ordered loveliness held the peculiar grace and charm described in the ancient literatures of the world.

"Throughout the whole journey we noticed a very touching change in him. A complex nature, whose moods could not always be accounted for, nor its views anticipated, seemed to simplify and to open up itself in a pleased receptivity and sweetness, which struck us a good deal. A baptism of sacred sorrow seemed to have washed away lesser troubles of the mind, its annoyances, irritations, fatigues, anxieties—the dust and grit, as it were, of the conflict of life—from his spirit, leaving it in a large tranquillity, or 'composure,' to use a favourite word of his own; and in a certain sense he seemed to us to have grown younger.

"He had charming visiting manners; his *rôle* of guest was perfect all the time, and he let us know his pleasure in little things we arranged for him. He generally fell in love with his bedrooms, and came to me in great glee at St. Raphael to say that a big, yellow, flowering acacia was

his close neighbour, so that from the balcony he could bury his face in it. He used to arrange his rooms to his own needs and fancy, and then to enjoy their ordered pleasantness with almost the zest of a girl. But he was no recluse, and never allowed us to feel either that he was unduly forcing his own heart in an effort to be cheerful for our sakes, or that when the hours of realisation came upon him we were in the way. His personal reserves were very great, as also his self-control and self-possession, but we were happy in the certainty that God's comfort and healing grace were finding him and ministering to him through every radiant day and peaceful night.

"During our sojourn together my husband became seriously unwell, and continued so until our return home. In these anxious circumstances Dr. Mackennal was of great help and comfort, he was so affectionately thoughtful for us. He himself had become so well that I could see he often mentally compared himself with our invalid, and it would certainly have amazed us all could we have looked into the near future and seen which of the two would be called away in little more than a year. For dear Dr. Mackennal would meet us at breakfast with a 'morning face,' and declare, perhaps, that he had 'slept for eight hours,' and, striking his chest, say that he 'felt like a young man.' A touching admission, by implication, of the way in which he *had* been sleeping and feeling of late. We were glad, too, that he felt he could say so to us, and that we should not misunderstand him. It is very sweet, now that he is gone, to recall those weeks of truer companionship than would ever have been possible in ordinary home and church life, and to realise that we got nearer to his truer and more lovable self than almost ever before in a long friendship. It was the 'Indian summer' of our friendship, as it seems to us now, alas!"

He refers to this visit in a letter to Mrs. Nairn on his return :—

“ I had four restful and happy weeks in the Riviera, and I am leading a busy life. I am in good health, too, but the sense of weariness is often very marked, and all I do lacks an incentive which I was always conscious of while my wife was with me, but the full energy of which I only now know. The sky is very grey, and all objects of life lack the atmosphere which used to surround them. But life is by no means unreal to me, and duty—service—has neither lost its hold nor its satisfaction.

“ Should we believe not, He abideth faithful, and it is an unutterable blessing when we are enabled to be responsive as well as believing. I am sure you know what that blessedness is.”

When he returned from Hyères he set himself to take up the yoke which custom had made easy. He was sorely wounded, but felt still that he had work to do and strength to do it. “ I sometimes fear that I am doomed to long life,” was an expression he sometimes used. He laid out plans for several years of quiet work. He gave up the large house where he had brought up his family, and took a cottage of content close to the Downs Church, with a large garden, and there he planned to entertain his grandchildren. When I saw him in February 1904, he spoke of his intention to publish some sets of his sermons, and of other plans of work. In January, 1904, he kept the first anniversary of his wife’s death, and put the spirit of his commemoration into these lines :—

One less—and all the world is changed,
I miss a voice, a face, a hand,
Bewildered and forlorn I stand,
With loving friends about me ranged,
One presence less.

One less—how calmly sleep the dead !
A burdening care my heart oppressed,
It died with her ; I find no rest,
For all the joy of life is fled,
One burden less.

One less—one slowly moving year ;
And sweetly comes the fateful day.
Low in the east the morning's ray
The light eternal draws more near.
One twelvemonth less.

The church had found in the Rev. J. Holden, M.A., of Norwich, a junior co-pastor who was able to relieve Dr. Mackennal of much of the regular work among the young which he found himself no longer able to undertake, and it seemed as if there might be a few years of co-operation in which Dr. Mackennal would have a decreasing share of responsibility ; but that was not to be. In March he attended the annual meetings of the Federation in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and caught a chill. He had promised to preach, on April 3rd, at my induction as minister of the Highgate Congregational Church. When that date arrived we were not yet in possession of our new house, so it happened that Dr. Mackennal, my wife and myself were guests in the same house. On Saturday evening Dr. Mackennal was unusually bright and full of interesting talk. He discovered with delight that his hostess, Mrs. Wenham, was a Cornish woman, and at once renewed his boyhood in and about Truro, challenging her memory of this and that person or place. On Sunday morning he came down to breakfast saying that he felt he had taken a chill, and had a shivering fit, but felt sure he would be well enough to preach. As we were less sure than he, Mr. Wenham asked his immediate neighbour, one of the staff of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and a distinguished pathologist, to come in and see the patient. He at once said that Dr. Mackennal must not think of preaching, and ordered him to bed.

The story of the next three months is one which the watchers in sick rooms will readily understand, though

few have gone through the experience with so good a patient. At first Dr. Mackennal was confident that he would be well again in a few days. He would look out the trains to Altrincham. Then he planned a short holiday with his sister, Mrs. Chambers, at Sidmouth, to give himself a chance of recovery. But meanwhile his temperature kept rising rather than falling, and the doctors would not hear of his being moved. Dr. Schorstein, of the London Hospital, came out to see him, and after this consultation those who tended him knew that it was doubtful if Dr. Mackennal could recover. Friends came to see him from far and near, and many who were not allowed to see him made their pilgrimage to Hampstead Lane ; "for," they said, "Mackennal is a man I entirely respect and admire." These were long beautiful days, when he sat by the open window on a couch watching summer come, and listening to the great choir of birds which sings morning and evening in the wooded gardens of Highgate—the finest choir in London ; on such days he was full of cheer and it was difficult to realise how ill he was. He saw his favorite Spanish iris bud and blossom, and his room was kept sweet with the flowers he loved. His sons and daughters came by turns from Manchester, so that one or another of them was with him most of the time. Mr. and Mrs. Wenham surrendered their house to their guest—whom they had hardly seen till he came to take possession of their house in this unexpected way—and to the nurses who constantly tended him ; and they did it all in the spirit of the perfect grace of Christian hospitality. There was a day when he sent for me and said that now he was "committing all into other hands than his own." He spoke a few words of personal counsel, talked to me on the subject of my last sermon, and said, "There has come to me of late an

apprehension of spiritual realities so vivid as to be almost overwhelming. I feel that I shall never be able to express either in speech or writing the truths I have seen ; and I think, Dugald, this may be a preparation for those things which God has prepared for them that love Him. I am sure that we have narrowed our conception of the future life by insisting too much that our own conceptions of happiness shall all be fulfilled. There may be kinds and qualities of happiness of which we have now no idea. We see through the glass darkly, but then face to face.” This was the mind in which he met the last great experience. He greeted his hostess one morning with a smile as he said in broad Cornish accent that he “ felt crool weak but powerful aisy.” One felt that he had fulfilled the divine ordinance of life ; he had almost reached three-score years and ten, and his spirit was beautifully mature and ready to move onward into the next stage of its being.

For several days before the end came he was only intermittently conscious. Then he seemed like a docile child in the hands of those who tended him, his head resting sweetly on the pillows of infinite power, infinite wisdom, and infinite love. On Thursday, June 23rd, the physical frame succumbed to the inner flame that consumed it, and

*The bud was opened to let out the rose,
The chain unloosed to let the captive free.*

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